Contributions by Billie Carleton, Jessie Pope, Rev. F. H. Gillingham, W. Douglas Newton, George Robey, etc.

e September

ROYAL

7D NET

YOU CAN SEND THIS MAGAZINE POST FREE TO THE TROOPS.
See page 342.

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

CHECK
YOUR ILLS

WITH

BEECHAM'S PILLS

Digitized by Google
Original from
NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Photo, Elwin Neame.

Have you ever had a shower-bath on the lawn? This is only one of the not-usually-indulged-in summer-time pleasures recommended by Miss Billie Carleton, the beautiful young actress, in her article entitled "Cool or Conventional?" which appears on page 331.

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Photo Bertram Park.

Miss Billie Carleton has done great things in revue, for she sings and dances delightfully, and whether in stage costume or the hot weather kit she recommends for various summer occupations, is always graceful and fascinating.

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

COOL or CONVENTIONAL?

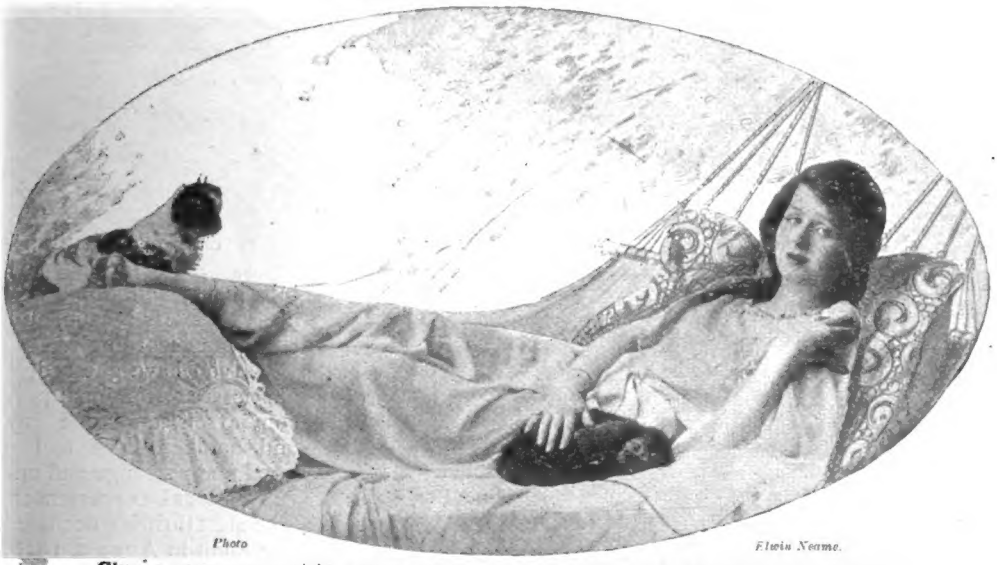


Photo Elwin Neame.

Given a warm summer night, a hammock with plenty of cushions is, in Miss Carleton's opinion, a far more comfortable sleeping place than the bed to which we habitually cling.

By Billie Carleton.

Summer is a delightful time, but it might be even more delightful if convention were relaxed a little, and we were free to adopt our own methods of keeping cool during the hot days. In the following article Miss Billie Carleton, the charming young actress who scored such a success in *Houp-la* and *Some*, suggests various refreshing occupations we might conceivably indulge in if we had the courage to step out of the beaten track.—Ed. R. M.

"How I wish I could go about in a kimono!" Haven't you often said it during the piping hot days that even England can produce when she sets her mind to it? And then because the neighbours might see you in the garden, and be affronted at your appearing in public in an article of attire usually considered sacred to your bedroom and trips to the bathroom, you put on the garments of a blameless life, a martyr to the cause of convention.

Look at it how you will, the hot weather brings lots of temptations in its train, but being the law-abiding citizens we are we still hesitate to fling convention to the winds, and yield to the many alluring but not-often-indulged-in pursuits that clamour for recognition. For instance, on a hot night in August, with the stars shining their brightest and the scent of roses in the air, isn't the garden a great improvement on a bedroom as a sleeping-place? Given a hammock and plenty of cushions, nothing could be more delicious; but no, because a bed is our traditional resting-place, we toss thereon throughout the night, and come down to breakfast with murderous instincts towards anyone who comments on our listless appearance.

It's the same with other things. You miss heaps of harmless fun if you are afraid to step out of the beaten track. Haven't you often yearned for a shower-bath on a stifling summer day? Well, why not put on your bathing-dress, go out on the lawn, and if you don't possess a sprinkler, persuade some person not addicted to practical joking to turn the hose on you? "But it's not the thing!" you say. Why not, I wonder?

Again, hasn't it ever struck you how cool and appropriate pyjamas would be as a hot-weather costume? I believe that in remote and tropical corners of the Empire where females do not penetrate that pyjamas are the staple

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

attire of the lords of creation. But if we were to venture out so much as to the pillar-box similarly clad, what a sensation we should cause! Of course, they're an ideal costume for tennis—yes, I *have* tried them, and the court was *not* very secluded—and it's ever so much easier to do brilliant things in the way of drives and volleys when you are not hampered by skirts.

I admit it isn't very easy to go your own sweet way at home, where well-meaning relations harbour early Victorian notions about propriety, but it's generally possible to spend your holidays at some tiny seaside place where your reputation will not be imperilled by your sleeping out of doors or spending your waking hours clad in a bathing-dress. At the worst, the inhabitants will think you are a harmless lunatic, and shun you accordingly.

Photo *Elsie Neame.*

Nothing can be more cool and comfortable for a stroll in the garden than a kimono. And it has the advantage of being very becoming too!

As you have guessed, I am not a conventional person myself, and, one way and another, I've had a good many strange and unconventional experiences. The most thrilling occurred one night in August, 1916, when I was appearing in *Samples*, in which you may remember I sang "The Broken Doll." I had been working very hard, and on this particular evening I was feeling so tired that I decided to go straight home after the performance. Just as I was leaving my dressing-room, a note was handed to me by the stage-doorkeeper. It was marked "Urgent," and read as follows:

August 30th, 1916.

DEAR MISS CARLETON,

You must pardon the seeming liberty I take in addressing this communication to you, but when I tell you that I am old enough to be your grandfather, and am not long for this world, I feel sure that out of the goodness of your heart you will grant me the very great favour I am about to ask.

Will you come out with the messenger I have sent with this, in my carriage which is at the door, and bring the music of "The Broken Doll"? The whole journey will not occupy more than two hours, and your presence will comfort the last hours of a dying man.

Yours faithfully.

Here was a dilemma! Should I go or not? It certainly was an unconventional appeal, and seemed to promise

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Convention may frown on an open-air shower-bath, but clad in a bathing-suit, there is no reason why anyone should not enjoy it as Miss Billie Carleton is doing, while——

adventure, and I and a love of adventure have been wedded ever since as a kiddie of seven, I hesitated between Polar exploration or cow-punching as my future career. Besides, I am Irish, and consequently impulsive, so I decided to go.

It was a wild and stormy night, and although it was August the rain was beating down furiously. On gaining the street I almost collided with a tall, cadaverous man, who was evidently the bearer of the letter I had just received. His appearance by no means inspired confidence, and when he said in a low, penetrating voice: "Come with me!" and opened the door of a darkened old fashioned carriage, I very nearly took to my heels and ran. But the stranger was a person of determination, and while I hesitated he half forced, half ushered me into the carriage, the door was slammed to, and we were off.

The only remark my companion made during the journey was not of a very reassuring nature. Just as we were passing the Adelphi stage-door, he said in the same sepulchral voice: "William Terriss was murdered here." I shuddered, and as my companion maintained his sinister silence and mile succeeded mile, I began to feel seriously alarmed. I was just summoning up my courage to make a bold dash for liberty, when the carriage turned in through a gloomy gateway, and drove up a dreary avenue of pines.

The house looked dark and forbidding, while the hall into which we were ushered was sombre enough to have delighted the heart of Hogarth himself. I was led up a winding staircase, and entered an enormous room in which, on an old-fashioned four-poster, lay an old man.

He was propped up by many pillows, and it was easy to see that he was not long for this world. In a feeble voice he murmured: "Quick, child, 'The Broken Doll,'" and, seeing there was not a moment to lose,

Photos Elwin Neame.

——another summer occupation less possible of achievement is to eat ice cream out of a pail!

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Photos Elwin Neame.

Pyjamas may not be the accepted costume for tennis, but Miss Carleton recommends them for the sake of coolness and convenience, and has even been tempted to cut her hair short for the same excellent reason.

I hurried to the spinet which stood in a corner of the room, sat down, and began to sing.

Even as I sang I could see that the old man was sinking fast, and as I finished the last line of the song, his head sank back on the pillow, and the doctor—whose presence I had not even noticed—whispered to me: "Come away; it is all over."

The carriage was still waiting when I reached the door, and as I was about to enter, a large, sealed packet was placed in my hand. On opening it I found, to my surprise, ten crisp £100 notes.

We had not gone far on the homeward journey when I realised that the horses had got beyond the coachman's control, and as we rounded a dangerous corner, the end came. There was a deafening crash, and—I awoke to hear the familiar voice of my maid, Annette, saying: "Your morning coffee, *Mademoiselle!*"

So you see that even my dreams are not always well-regulated, conventional affairs!

An experience of a far more amusing kind—though equally unconventional!—took place at a Bond Street studio when the photographs that illustrate this article were taken. It was really the monkey's fault—you can see him in the pictures; a cunning wee beastie, isn't he? His name used to be Ebenezer, but since he has been "missing at Lloyd's," I always think of him as "Massingberd"—you remember James Payne's novel, "Lost Sir Massingberd"? Appropriate, don't you think? Well, Ebenezer didn't like the camera; it got on his nerves and, as he has no sense of duty, he deserted and made a wild dash for freedom.

I had just put on my bathing-dress when it happened, and, without stopping to catch up a wrap of any kind, I rushed helter-skelter down the stairs. They were stone stairs, and cold as ice to my bare feet, but in my anxiety about Ebenezer, I never gave a thought to such trifles as pneumonia or rheumatic fever. Right to the ground floor I went, brushing past an astonished and wheezy old gentleman, and closely pursued by an agitated attendant bearing my kimono.

At the front door I paused, to the vast amazement of the occupants of a passing 'bus and of Bond Street pedestrians. I suppose a distraught maiden attired only in a bathing-suit *is* an unusual sight even in

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

the West End. Several people were looking up and pointing, and while I hesitated, uncertain whether to brave further publicity in search of the runaway, my maid rushed down with the welcome news that Ebenezer had been run to earth. It seemed that he had paused on the first floor and penetrated into a suite of rooms sacred to a costumier; the window being opened, he had dashed through it, and was even now clinging to the stone coping outside—hence the upward gaze of the good folk in Bond Street!

It took much coaxing on my part to persuade Ebenezer to return, but finally he succumbed to my blandishments and was carried up to the studio in triumph, quite oblivious of the fact that I had defied the conventions entirely for his sake.

Ever since I was a child there is one temptation that has assailed me regularly every summer, and that is to cut off my hair. Short hair would be such a boon in hot weather, and would save any amount of time and temper. Once when I was nine years old I did get as far as annexing the garden shears and commencing operations, but the spanking that followed had a discouraging effect, and I have never worked myself up to the point again.

One thing that always attracts me in hot weather is water—not so much as a thirst-quencher, though I admit it has its uses in that direction—as for external application. I adore cold baths, and should love to spend a day in one, while the sight of a lake or stream always inspires in me an intense longing to paddle. I really think that one of my remote ancestors must have been a mermaid, and I can never understand why it is quite *comme il faut* for us to paddle at the seaside, but the height of impropriety for us to do likewise in the Serpentine. I am sure "Serpentine Parade" would be a great society "draw," for no one who mattered would dare to be absent, lest it be inferred that she was ashamed of her ankles!

Photos *Elwin Neame.*

Miss Billie Carleton thinks a succession of cold baths would be delightful on a hot day, and sees no reason why the joys of paddling should be sacred to children.

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

THE BLUE SILK DRESS.

By
James Francis
Dwyer.

"I love that beauty should go beautifully."

I.

It was a wonderful dress. There was nothing like it in Bond Street—at least, there was nothing like it in the eyes of Miss Florence Harding. Miss Harding had examined every other creation that was exposed to the view of the Bond Street saunterers, and she had decided that the blue silk that was labelled "Original model by Recondet, Paris," was infinitely superior to all others.

Why no one purchased the blue silk dress puzzled Florence. Each afternoon, as she hurried up the street to get a glimpse of it before going home to the little flat in Bloomsbury, she expected to find the window looking forlorn and desolate because some person of discrimination had noted the charm of the dress that was so apparent to her own eyes; but the dress remained.

Once the window had been partly re-dressed, but the Recondet model remained though two other dresses were taken away. Florence thought that the man who dressed the window was, like her, surprised that no one purchased the costume, and that he had decided to give the blind saunterers another chance to admire its beauty.

Florence pictured herself in the dress. She was tall and slight, and she told herself that she could carry it well. She had auburn hair, and auburn hair would go admirably with the Recondet.

"I should look amazingly well in it," she said one day as she paused before the window. "I know I should."

Florence became madly curious about the price of the dress. She knew that it was worth more than she could dream of paying, yet the whips of curiosity drove her to inquire.

One afternoon she plucked up her courage, opened the door, and stepped into the shop. It was only a small shop, but it was distinctly aristocratic. The carpet was green, obsequiously yielding, pleasing beneath the feet.

A girl, wonderfully beautiful, came towards Florence and smiled sweetly.

"Good-afternoon," she murmured, placing a chair for Miss Harding.

"Good-afternoon," said Florence. "I just wanted to know the price of the blue silk dress in the window?"

"Oh, the Recondet model," said the girl. "Why, it's thirty guineas. It is very beautiful, isn't it?"

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

"It's divine," stammered Florence, endeavouring to hide the amazement which came to her when apprised of the price. "It—it is a glorious dress."

"You would like to see it?" asked the girl, moving towards the window.

"No, no," said Florence. "Please don't bother. I—I just wanted to know the price of it—that's all."

A tall man with a curious, tired face and large, dark eyes that were strangely luminous, came from the other end of the shop and looked inquiringly at the beautiful girl who had answered the question put by Florence.

"What is it, Miss Beatrice?" he asked.

"The Recondet," said the girl called Miss Beatrice, smiling at him. "This young lady wished to know the price of it."

"Ah, the Recondet!" he exclaimed, clasping his hands together and wheeling upon Florence with a strange, ecstatic light upon his face. "Ah, the Recondet! Is it not wonderful?"

"It is beautiful!" cried Florence. "It is the prettiest dress I have ever seen."

"It is! It is!" cried the man. "It's a poet's dream!"

"I look at it each afternoon as I am going home from work," said Florence, making no attempt, in the face of the man's enthusiasm, to pose as a possible purchaser. "I have watched it ever since you put it in the window. And—and to-day I was so anxious to know the price that I had to come in and inquire."

The young lady smiled sweetly at the unaffected innocence of the girl; the man with the wonderful eyes and the long, white hands moved closer to Florence.

"It is too dear for you, is it?" he murmured.

"Oh, yes!" cried the girl. "It would take all the money I earn for twenty weeks and more to buy it. I am only a typist."

The dark-eyed man showed no astonishment. He nodded his head slowly and smiled at the girl's *naïveté*. She was sweet and innocent, and he loved the praise of the Recondet which she poured forth.

"It is a pity you could not buy it," he said. "It would suit you—your figure and your hair! Yes, yes, Mademoiselle, it would be a pleasure to sell it to you! Some day perhaps a fat lady will like it, and I shall be sorry to sell it to her. But to you—--" He broke off, glanced at the Recondet with affection in his eyes, and went back to the rear of the shop.

The assistant smiled at Florence, who was moving towards the door. "Mr. Delpierre loves that dress," she murmured.

"So do I," said Florence. "Thank you very much. Good-afternoon."

The thoughts produced by the blue silk dress helped to carry Florence Harding through a particularly trying time. She had for four months preceding the day on which the Recondet model had first appeared in the Bond Street window acted as typist to a firm of estate agents in Oxford Street, but on the memorable day the blue silk burst upon her vision the firm elected to take in another partner.

The new partner's name was Vernon—Edward Vernon—and he cast his eyes upon Florence Harding the moment he entered the office. He made no effort to hide his feelings. The other partners were out of the office for considerable periods of the day, and during those periods Florence had to use much strategy to keep the new partner in his place. He made repeated attempts to take her hand while dictating letters to her, pleaded again and again for a dinner appointment, and seemed to become more and more persistent when she refused to have anything to do with him.

In those early days Florence thought of giving up her position, but its loss would be a serious matter. Mrs. Harding looked forward to Florence's contribution each week. The thirty shillings purchased many household necessities which the scanty earnings of Mr. Harding were unable to buy.

Luck had not been kind to John Harding. At one time he had been an hotel manager, but he had come down in the world, losing one job after another through no fault of his own, and at the time of Mr. Vernon's admission to partnership he was holding a mysterious position, the nature of which he would not disclose to his own family. They surmised that it was some menial post, and they asked no questions.

Florence told her troubles to a friend, and the friend laughed.

"Take no notice of him," she cried. "Don't be a fool. Hang on to your job, kid."

"But he drives me crazy!" said Florence. "He's old, and he wants to hold my hand and kiss me and take me out to dinner."

"Don't worry about him. All the old Rip Van Winkles in the country want to hold the hands of their typists. Just laugh at him; that's the best way."

So Florence Harding decided to hold on to her position, and to treat the love-sick Vernon as her friend suggested. She kept him in his place, but she did not become so angry at his advances. She smiled and laughed, told him that he was ridiculous and stupid, and, after a time, so convinced was she that she was quite capable of looking after herself, she was amused and rather

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

pleased at her ability to hold Vernon at arm's-length.

"Let me kiss you once," he pleaded often.

"Not once," she would reply gaily. "There's no chance for you."

"Well, come and dine with me, Florence."

"Not me! Get some other girl that likes old men."

It was on the very afternoon that Florence made the remark about old men that she got a surprise. She had stopped as usual to look at the Recondet model, and she was staring at it with eyes that saw nothing else, when someone tapped her on the shoulder.

Florence looked up quickly and met the gaze of Mr. Edward Vernon. He smiled at her, and she smiled back at him. She was out of doors, and the little defences which had to be kept in good repair while working with him in the office could be thrown aside for the moment.

"Well, little one," he said, "what is there in that window that attracts you so much? I've watched you looking at it for three afternoons running."

"You've watched me?" she cried. "I never heard of such impudence!"

"Nonsense!" said Vernon. "I like you, and I'm jealous. I thought you might be meeting someone, so I followed. The first afternoon, when I saw you standing so long outside this shop, I thought he might be working here."

Florence laughed joyously. She was immensely amused to think that her admiration of the blue silk dress had fooled Vernon into the belief that she had a sweetheart employed in the little shop.

"There's something here that I love better than any sweetheart or anything else," she said boldly.

"Really?" murmured Vernon in surprise. "What is it?"

"Have a look and see if you can guess," she said.

Vernon glanced at the window. He looked quietly over the half-dozen dresses that were exposed to view; then his eye returned to the Recondet model.

"It's the blue silk dress," he said.

"You've guessed it!" cried Florence, and at that moment she liked her employer better than she had ever liked him before. She would have been angry with him if he had picked out one of the other dresses, not one of which would have suited her, and she was immensely pleased at his choosing the wonderful Recondet that would become so admirably her figure and auburn hair.

"It's a beautiful dress," said Vernon.

"Isn't it?" she cried. "I look at it every afternoon."

"It would suit you," said the man.

Again Florence Harding felt that Vernon was really not as bad as she had thought he was. He had discrimination.

"The man in the shop said that it would suit me," she confided. "I went in one day and asked the price of it."

"Did you?" inquired Vernon, a curious smile in his hard eyes.

"Yes," said Florence; then, suddenly reminded that she was talking to her employer for an inordinately long time, she bade him a hurried good-afternoon and skipped away up the street before he could detain her.

The next day but one was Sunday, a day when Mr. Harding managed to have one meal in his own home. And during that meal Florence mentioned the Recondet model. She told them of its beauty, and her father, eating quietly, listened to the lengthy description which the girl gave her mother. Mr. Harding's conversational abilities had been swept away with his good fortune, and he only gave a grunt or two when Florence tried by a direct question to draw him into the conversation.

"Don't you think it sounds beautiful, Dad?" she asked.

"Umph," he said.

"It's the most beautiful blue in the world!" cried the girl—"a wonderful robin's-egg blue that would suit me down to the ground."

"I'll buy it for you when I make a fortune," said Harding, with a curious, contemptuous little laugh.

The following afternoon Florence hurried up Bond Street. She had not seen the Recondet since the Friday afternoon, and her eyes were hungry for a glance at it. As she walked along she began to think of it as something which she really possessed. In her thoughts it was *her* dress. The man in the shop said that it would suit her, Vernon had told her that she would look well in it, her mother that morning had laughingly remarked: "Don't lose too much time looking at your dress, Florence."

"It is *my* dress," murmured the girl. "I feel that it is mine. I don't think anyone will buy it, and perhaps they'll cut its price down and down till Mother can afford to——"

She stopped, open-mouthed with astonishment, and stared at the window. The Recondet model had disappeared! In the place where it had been was a costume of old-rose that stood up boldly and challenged scrutiny.

Florence forgot herself for a few seconds. The strange sense of possession that had

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

come to her made her oblivious of the ridicule which her actions at that moment might bring upon her. She pushed open the door of the shop and ran blindly forward.

The same assistant was there, and she smiled a greeting which Florence did not return.

"You've sold it!" cried the girl. "You've sold it!"

"The Recondet?" asked the assistant. "Oh, yes; we sold it this morning."

Florence Harding had difficulty in restraining her tears. "This morning," she murmured. "Oh, I'm sorry! Did—did a fat woman buy it, as Mr. Delpierre expected?"

"No," said the assistant. "A gentleman bought it for his daughter, and he told Mr. Delpierre and me that she was tall and slight and that she had auburn hair. Aren't you glad that no fat lady got it?"

The tears came in spite of Florence's determination to hold them back. She took out her little handkerchief to wipe her face, but when the assistant attempted to sympathise with her she suddenly realised how ridiculous she was, and rushed madly from the shop.

"I'm a fool!" she cried as she ran up the street. "I'm a crazy fool! But it was the most beautiful dress in the world, and—and I had been thinking so much of its being my dress that I fooled myself into believing it really was."

The disappointment was with her on the following morning. She knew that it was a ridiculous matter to grieve about, but she could not help it. She felt inclined to hate everybody. She hated everyone at the office, and most of all she hated Vernon. She was afraid that he would ask some question regarding the dress, and she knew that any allusion to it would upset her greatly.

About eleven o'clock Vernon walked into the outer office where Florence was working.

"Well, Flo," he said gaily, "how are you to-day?"

"I'm all right, Mr. Vernon," she answered.

"You don't look it," he said. "Have you had a disappointment?"

"No."

"Well, what's wrong?"

"Nothing."

"Oh, nonsense. You look as if someone was dead."

She didn't answer him, and after looking down at her for a moment, he walked into his own office. For a few minutes only the banging of the typewriter keys disturbed the silence, then Vernon called out:

"Flo, I want you."

The girl stood up and walked towards the door. "Do you wish to dictate?" she asked.

"No, I want to show you something."

She stopped at the door of the office and paused. "What is it?" she asked.

"Come in and see," said Vernon.

Florence Harding stepped into the room and stood transfixed with amazement. On the desk before her was the Recondet, the wonderful Recondet that had created more beautiful dreams than any other object that had ever come before her eyes!

She tried to cry out, but the words stuck in her throat. A strange, pleasant thrill swept over her, a curious indefinable thrill that came from some knowledge which she was unable for the moment to feel that she possessed. Like someone walking in a trance she came forward haltingly and fingered the wonderful creation, touched the skirt of robin's-egg blue that had made the dreams, and the bodice that had raised up in her a covetousness that was overpowering.

To her ears came Vernon's voice, speaking to her. He was saying something, something so ridiculous that she repeated his words over and over to herself in an effort to find a reason for their utterance.

Vernon spoke again. "It is yours, Florence," he said.

"Mine!" she cried. "Why—why—what do you mean?"

"I bought it for you," he said. "I bought it for you because you told me how you liked it."

She was torn with a score of emotions as she turned to him. Sensations strange and new gripped her. She became hot and then cold, she had a feeling that she was going to faint; then, gripping the table, she steadied herself, and spoke calmly.

"But—but I can't take it!" she cried.

"Oh, yes, you can," said Vernon airily.

"I cannot! I cannot!"

"Look here, Flo," said the man. "Don't employers give presents to their employees when they find them good and faithful? You're thinking of your father and mother, aren't you?"

She tried to say "no," but she could not. She was thinking of what her father and mother would say, but she would not admit it to Vernon.

"I know," he said. "Every girl thinks that. She wonders what they'll say instead of thinking out some scheme to throw dust in their eyes. It's easy enough. You've been with the firm for some time, and if the firm wants to present you with a dress, what is it to do with your father and mother? Now I am acting for the firm, and I'm giving the dress on one condition."

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

She looked at him for a moment without speaking; then she moistened her dry lips and asked a question. "What is the condition?"

"That you wear it out to dinner with me this evening," said Vernon, smiling at her interest.

"I cannot!" she cried. "I cannot!"

"Nonsense! You can send your mother word that you are going to work late in the office. It's the end of the quarter, tell her. And you can change your dress in the spare office. You'll do it."

"I won't! I won't!"

Vernon looked at the girl, his shrewd, cold eyes fixed upon her white face. Very slowly he took out a match-box, picked up the Recondet model, struck a match, and brought the flame close to the skirt.

"What are you going to do?" cried the girl. "What—what——"

"I'm going to burn it," he said quickly. "I bought it for you, and if you won't accept it I'll burn it up. It's no good to me."

He pushed the match close to the skirt that had been modelled by an artist, and Florence Harding thrust out her hand as if she would protect it.

"Don't!" she shrieked. "*Don't!*"

"I will," he said. "I will if you won't come out to dinner with me. Here she goes in smoke. Say good-bye to it, Flo. It's going——"

"I'll come," she said huskily. "I'll come!"

II.

There are a few restaurants in London that have curious reputations. They are brilliantly-lighted places where expensive food is served by soft-footed waiters. They have shaded lights and sweet music, and there are quiet cosy corners in which couples who do not seek publicity can take shelter and talk undisturbed.

The Red Terrapin is one of these places. In The Red Terrapin the waiters are discreet, close-mouthed fellows, who neither see nor hear. It is a place where strange things happen, and if a girl protests against the actions of her escort the waiters know that it would be very foolish of them to interfere.

It was to The Red Terrapin that Vernon took Florence Harding on the evening following the memorable morning on which the existence of the Recondet model had been threatened. Florence wore the Recondet, and she looked most charming in the wonderful creation. As the shopman had said, the dress suited her auburn hair and her tall, supple figure.

"You look a dream," said Vernon, his eyes feasting upon her lovely form. "By Jove, you look splendid!"

She blushed as she noted the hungry look in the man's eyes. She was still afraid, afraid of how the story of the gift would be received in the little Bloomsbury flat; she was afraid of Vernon, and, strangely, she was afraid of the atmosphere of The Red Terrapin.

The last bred a terror in her, a terror that she could not analyse. It was so very quiet and peaceful in the place, and yet the quiet and peace were unnerving. She wished she had not come. The cosy corners startled her, the whispers that came to her ears disturbed her strangely.

"It's a grand place," said Vernon, when they were seated in a quiet corner. "You can talk without being disturbed. No one interferes with you here. They have private rooms, too. Would you like a private room, Flo?"

"No, no," she cried, and a little shiver passed over her as she answered him.

Vernon laughed. He swallowed a cocktail, and drew his chair a little closer to hers. "Now, now, little girl, no one's going to hurt you," he said. "Aren't you going to give your Uncle Dudley a kiss?"

"Don't! Don't!" she breathed. "Don't, Mr. Vernon! Please, please don't!"

"Silly!" he cried. "What's your little game, sweetheart? Are you too mean to kiss me?"

"I don't want to kiss you!"

"The stubborn little thing," he said, clutching her hand and retaining it in spite of her struggles. "Come on, Flo, be a sport! Just a little kiss before the waiter brings the soup. Just one——"

"I won't!" she gasped. "Mr. Vernon, I—I—I'll cry out!"

He sprang at her as she endeavoured to rise. He gripped her hand and pulled it across the table, knocking the shade from the table-lamp. The girl sprang to her feet, and her face showed white and startled in the light.

Vernon saw and endeavoured to correct his blunder. "There, there!" he cried. "I'm sorry. Sit down, little girl. Don't make a scene. The waiter's coming with the soup. He didn't see. Sit down, Flo."

He hurriedly tried to put the shaded cover over the lamp, so that the look of fear upon the face of the girl would be hidden from the soft-footed waiter who was approaching, bearing the soup tureen, and, as he endeavoured to screen the light, he spoke in a reassuring whisper.

"It was my fault," he said. "I'm sorry. Do you forgive me, Flo?"

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Florence gave a little scream of horror . . . "You old fool!" growled Vernon. "Take the young lady somewhere where she can fix herself up!"

[Page 34, col. 1.]

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

"Yes, yes," she sobbed.

"I'll be good," he muttered, inwardly cursing her stubbornness. "I'll be good all through the—— Confound it, you fool! Why did you do that?"

The last part of his remark was addressed to the waiter. The shade had slipped up for an instant as the servant was placing the tureen upon the table, and part of the hot contents had slopped into the lap of the girl.

Florence gave a little scream of horror, while Vernon cursed the stupidity of the waiter. In the half-light he could not see the face of the man who was mumbling apologies.

"You old fool!" growled Vernon. "Take the young lady somewhere where she can fix herself up! Quick! Don't worry, Flo. I'll buy you another dress to-morrow. Don't cry, girlie! Here, you old idiot, show her the way to go!"

The old waiter led Florence Harding away, and Vernon sat down to wait for her return. He cursed softly to himself. He was angry, angry with the girl, angry with the waiter, angry with his own futile attempts to break down the girl's reserve.

He drank two more cocktails that were brought to him by a young waiter who replaced the old man.

He cursed the delay. What was keeping Flo? Only a small quantity of the soup had spilt upon her dress. Why couldn't she wipe it off and return to him?

He called for another cocktail, and questioned the young waiter who brought it.

"Where did that old fool take the young lady?" he asked.

"I don't know, sir," answered the young man.

"Go and look for him!"

"Yes, sir."

The young man turned to obey Vernon's bidding, but at that moment the old waiter came hobbling towards them. He carried a bundle wrapped in brown paper, which he placed upon the table in front of Vernon.

"She sent you that, sir," he said quietly.

"What? Who sent it?"

"The young lady sent it."

"Why? What the deuce is it?"

The old man did not answer, and Vernon reached out and drew the parcel towards him. He tore away a piece of the paper, and an oath dropped from his lips. He tilted the lamp-shade, and tore the object madly from its wrappings. It was the wonderful Recondet, the marvellous robin's-egg-blue Recondet fashioned by the hands of a poet to bring dreams to beautiful women!

"Where has she gone?" cried Vernon, springing at the old man. "Where did she go?"

"Home," answered the waiter, speaking in a low, tense voice. "Home!"

For a moment Vernon stood speechless; then he wheeled upon the servant. "You infernal old idiot! You made all this trouble for me!" he cried. "I'll get you sacked. Do you hear?"

"Yes, sir!"

"What's your name! Quick! Tell me your name!"

The old man took a deep breath, and drew himself upright.

"Harding," he said quietly. "That is my name. John Alexander Harding."

"SEND US THE 'ROYAL'!"

"The good old ROYAL is always ahead with the 'Tommies'!"

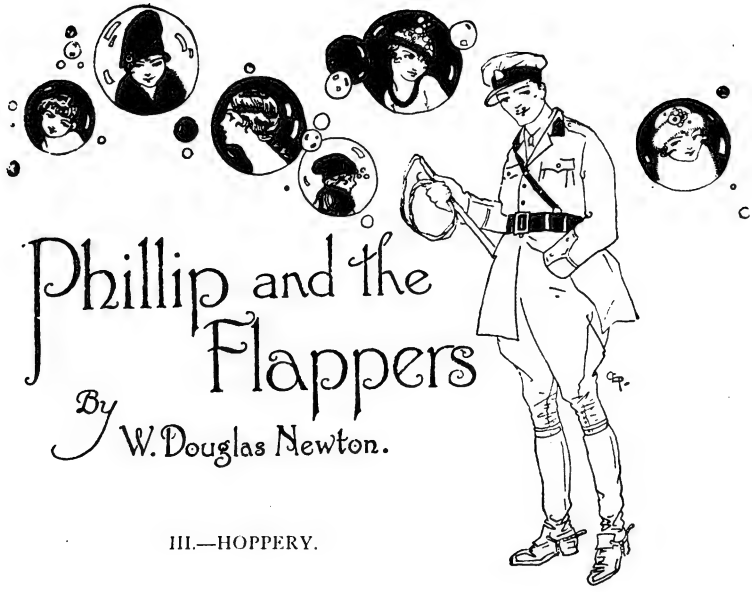
This is only one of the many appreciative comments of the fighting men who look to the ROYAL to cheer up their dull moments, and to you to see that they get it.

Your part is so simple. Just hand as many copies of the ROYAL as you can collect over the counter at any post-office, without wrapping of any kind, and they will be distributed among the troops to the very best advantage.

Remember Sir Douglas Haig himself wrote to urge all those at home who have been accustomed to buy books and magazines in the past to continue to do so freely, if possible in increasing numbers, and having read and enjoyed them to pass them on as freely for circulation among the troops.

"Tommy's" leisure is often of the spasmodic order, and that's why short stories and brief, breezy articles are the very thing for him. He will fight twice as well if he is in good spirits, so—well, it's up to you, isn't it?

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY



Phillip and the Flappers

By W. Douglas Newton.

III.—HOPPERY.

Phillip is a young Staff-Officer who revels in the society of flappers, and, home wounded from the Front, finds ample scope for indulgence in this direction. His frivolous exterior leads some people to form unflattering opinions as to his intelligence, until they enter the lists against him, and, like Murphy Noble, retire discomfited, to find their most cherished plans unexpectedly foiled.

I.

MURPHY NOBLE was saying something tart over his shoulder, and people who do that sort of thing have no right to come rapidly through library doors. Through breakfast-room doors, if one likes, because then one only knocks over butlers—but library doors, no. One might cannon into Phillip.

"Good morning, Little Brother Tank," said Phillip sweetly. "Would you mind taking your left caterpillar-wheel off my dearest corn? Thanks."

"Ough!" spluttered Murphy Noble. "Have I run into an iron fence? Oh, it's Phillip, is it." His yellowish eye looked with venomous contempt at the dazzling young man. "I admit you may have uses as a decoration, Manwaering, but I do wish you wouldn't strew yourself in places where people might tread on you. Of all the entirely useless and entirely vacant-headed young idiots in the Army, Manwaering——" He caught sight of Phillip's hands. "Letters!" he gasped. Violently and anxiously he limped towards the letter-rack.

"Yes," said Phillip, "there is the usual—I mean there is a letter for Murphy Noble." He watched the civilian with his bland and *blasé* eyes, the innocent eyes which seemed to see little, but saw so much. And Noble was a little worth watching. He snatched at his letter, his lips framed an inevitable "Damn!" and he hastily crammed the letter into his pocket. His face was a scowl, but abruptly he realised that Phillip was looking at him.

"Might I ask you why you are staring at me like a stuffed guinea-pig?" he snapped. "Why stand there exuding natural idiocy? You've trampled on me like a baby avalanche; you've bruised me all over in a Prussian manner. And now you stand there—I suppose they *do* have use for things like you in the Army, to make billets pretty; but why a homely citizen——"

At that precise moment there came a giggle—a fine and silvery little giggle, a

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

naughty and piercing little giggle, and it came from the library.

Murphy Noble turned, choked, and—hopped.

II.

Phillip went into the library and found two ankles.

Of course, one quite often finds an ankle in a library, only these were ankles of perfection. Slim ankles and silken; neat ankles and enrapturing. Ankles of vivacity and promise. Just the sort of ankles to possess a silvery giggle. Phillip, smiling cheerfully at the delectable ankles, walked round the wing of the bookshelves to meet the lady who lived above them.

The little lady above the ankles jerked the thick, rusty-gold pigtail from her shoulder and smiled up at the young Staff-Lieutenant.

"Oh, good!" she said, and her amber-coloured eyes shone. "I'm so glad it was you, Phillip. If it had been the butler, or Uncle Dick, he would only have *bounced* off. You're so delightfully knobbly and hard—oh, even under your jolly clothes. Do you think you bruised him fatally?"

Phillip sat down on a stool which gave him the best observation post for René's daring and delicious face. Phillip always acted upon the theory that it is a man's duty to look upon the best things in life. He sat and looked at his hostess' younger daughter.

René sat exactly as she had been sitting. That is, she continued not really to sit. Half of her was in an exceedingly cosy chair, her slim calves hanging over the arm. She shook her head to get her plait out of the conversation, and asked again:

"Did you bruise him fatally, Phillip" (and she said it with the two 'l's' and slowly)? "Do you think you shattered him anywhere?"

"I don't think he shatters," said Phillip. "He squelches. I've met bolsters with a better physical development. But why this 'strafe' attitude towards little Murph?"

René wriggled a deliciously young wriggle; with the quick lissomeness of youth she sat upright.

"Phillip," she demanded, "Phillip, tell me without prejudice what is your opinion of that unspeakable little bounder?"

"I have just had Murphy walking over me; wiping his feet on me; speaking his little white thoughts to me—my opinion might be bulgy on the bitter side."

"I see," said René calmly. "As mother's guest you express no opinion about another guest. All the same, in that part of your brain labelled, 'Not For Publication,' you recognise that Murphy Noble is of the extreme limit. Now, Phillip, wrestle with yourself and let's have the truth."

"Well, I will admit," he smiled, "that I did wonder somewhere what kindness towards the outcast led your mother to ask him down here."

René snorted and tossed her glittering head.

"And Stella—what do you think of Stella and *her* kindness to that tubby little slug? Come now!"

"If you don't mind, I won't think aloud about that bit," said the young officer easily, though there was a light in his eyes that was not easy—for Stella and this Murphy man had presented a curious problem. "And now we have had this little chat about our fleshy and hurtling friend, let's talk of something really serious."

René, with a bewildering indifference to the shortness of the modern skirt, swished her silken ankles over the chair-arm once again.

"Comfy old thing, Phillip," she said. "So reliable and so decent; so entirely an ass to look at, yet underneath the parting in the middle—brain, real brain. Brain side out please, Phillip. I want brains. I need them to eliminate Murphy Noble." She leant forward, and her warm, strong hand caught the Lieutenant's. "Phillip, do you know that just before that—that maggot bounced into you, I had asked him, as a decent man, to give up the idea of marrying a girl who positively loathes him? And he isn't a decent man."

Phillip sat back on his stool and smiled calmly and drily. (But you must beware of that sort of smile in Phillip.) He nodded.

"So—Stella has come a mucker in the matter of Murphy?"

"You click very quickly, old thing," sighed René contentedly.

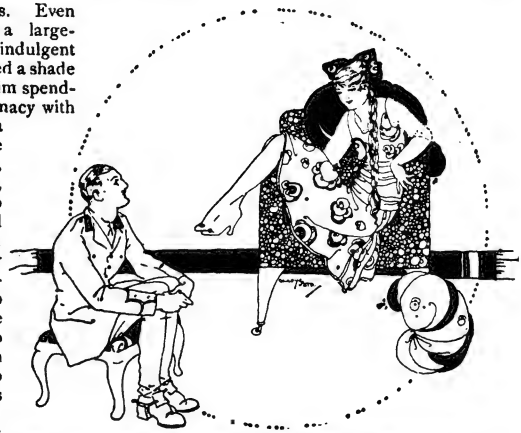
"Habit!" said Phillip. "Staff work makes one look at things and add them up—I can do it in my sleep now. And to see Stella with Murphy, and to find them alone and talking hard in those places where one coughs before entering—well, a blind man would have noticed it as unusual."

Phillip, in fact, had considered it unusual and unpleasant from the first.

So that he might recover more quickly from the dose of shrapnel in his leg, Phillip had been asked by his friend, Mrs. Paton, to stay at her Devon house. He had looked for the brightest of Blighty times with his kindly hostess and her two lyrical daughters, and to his wonderment he had found the landscape marred by the presence of Murphy Noble. He had been a little startled. He had not been able to connect up the bouncing

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Murphy with his hostesses. Even though Mrs. Paton was a large-hearted, soft-willed, over-indulgent widow, Murphy Noble seemed a shade beyond the limit. To see him spending his time in curious intimacy with pretty, twenty-year-old Stella was baffling, but also, since it was no business of his, beyond his comment. Now, however, that René—who had the spirit of her dead father rather than that of her mild mother and elder sister—now that René, the vigorous, had taken him on to the Staff — well, all the Phillipic gifts of Phillip could be brought to bear on the undoing of the man who bumps into one and then is rude about it.



René . . . swished her silken ankles over the chair-arm again. "Comfy old thing, Phillip," she said. "So reliable and so decent."

"Stella," said René, "is an awful idiot, but she is in a ghastly fix, Phillip. She is engaged to Murphy Noble!"

"My hat!" mentioned Phillip. "But that was what I thought."

"It's a secret, of course."

"Of course, you couldn't possibly make the lad Murphy public. But why? I mean, people don't go entirely mad without reason."

"Is being a woman a reason? Because that's the first of them. That's why Stella became engaged, and why mother didn't behave sensibly and have the little wretch put out. He just fascinated the pair of them—at first. You know, deep underneath him is the remains of good breeding; he really began life as a decent creature, and there are times when to remember how to behave is profitable. We met him at the Moriston's. So-so people the Moristons, but good at Bridge—and you know mother's kink for Bridge, and Stella's. Well, Murphy played Bridge like a dream, and fascinated them with his parlour tricks—and there you are.

"The fascination business didn't so much matter with mother; she knows just where it should stop. Stella is different—not old enough to know, I suppose; and then he made the pace with Stella. I won't tell you all the sickly details, but in the end the fond pair plighted their troth."

"It sounds," admitted Phillip, "very much like 'The Road to Ruin,' or 'The Girl Who Took the Wrong *Fiancé*.'"

"It sounds like the worst possible class of melodrama, only it happens to be idiotically and furiously true. Mother, for once, prepared to put her foot down. But Stella pleaded. She wept copiously down mother's jabot. Mother was softened—also, Murphy had an I.O.U. for card debts written in mother's best handwriting."

"René," cried Phillip, "are you pulling my leg? Those things don't happen, you know. It's a sort of large and elaborate joke."

"Does Murphy strike you as a joke? No; he doesn't. And he isn't. Well, Stella's love and mother's I.O.U. won the day for the time being, and I now see that mother gave way because she was wise. She knew that if Murphy had enough rope he would hang himself so far as Stella was concerned—and she was right. Murphy hadn't really enough good breeding to last out. And Stella in time came to hate the beast."

"Stella asked to be released from the engagement?" queried Phillip.

"Yes, and he wouldn't hear of it. He wouldn't break the engagement. And he produced an I.O.U."

"*The* I.O.U. You mean your mother's?"

"Another I.O.U.—Stella's. Stella also plays Bridge. She plays it more extravagantly than mother."

"There seems to be a sort of germ in the family," said Phillip. "But—I.O.U.'s are occasionally paid. Is there——"

"Yes, there is a difficulty. The sum is rather large, and to get it we'd have to tell Uncle Dick, who's trustee, to sell things. We are firmly determined to move heaven and earth before we go to Uncle Dick. We suggest to Murphy that we pay in easy stages, but he considers Stella a bigger price."

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

"How?"

"Stella will be twenty-one in three months, and under father's will——"

"It wasn't bright of me," said Phillip. "I should have remembered wills and comings of age. Go on, René."

"He wants Stella and is inclined to press. At a pinch he says he will take us into the Breach of Promise Court; it is sometimes done from the man's side, and Murphy will do it if driven, just for the sake of revenge. And—and there we are—Phillip; Murphy with all the cards in his hands and the rest of us mad and frightened. What can be done, Phillip? Phillip, if you can help us out of this loathsome mess-up, I'll hug you—if not, I'll go mad."

Phillip grinned.

"I should hate you to go mad, René," he said. It is possible that René forgot she had to *wait* for the moment of hug.

III.

"One of the things we learn in war," said Phillip to René, "is that every enemy has his weak spot—even Murphy. As for Murphy, I happen to have been noticing his curious habits and modes of living. I think we might do a Great Offensive on him."

Phillip thereupon walked out of the library. He walked rather aimlessly, looking at the letter-rack in the hall, and about it, going on into the smoking-room and the billiard-room. In his walks he did vague things, prying about rather foolishly in corners and waste-paper baskets, taking notepaper from stationery cabinets and doing other odd tricks. After a time he came back to René in the library.

"I should hate you to go mad, René," he said. It is possible that René forgot she had to *wait* for the moment of hug.

"If you would like to hug me again," he beamed. "Oh, well, don't be afraid I shall complain of excess payment. . . . Now go down behind that wing of shelves and remain hidden and mouse-like. I am going to do the Douglas Haig act with Murph."

Murphy Noble came into the library full of beans and bluff. He felt he hadn't been called just for the joy of his presence. As a thoroughly hardened adventurer he guessed there'd be fighting, and he was ready to fight. When he saw Phillip the beautifully tunicked, he sneered. Like other men, he felt no man could be like Phillip and have a mind of his own. Phillip helped the idea along by smiling with amiable fatuity.

"I thought," said Phillip, beginning, "I thought we might fill in a happy half-hour together. You know I never really knew whom you reminded me of, but now I know. As you stand there, so haughty and windy, I am again struck by the resemblance."

"I remind you of someone?" snarled Murphy, standing on his guard. "Impossible—who could it be?"

"Oh, just a German prisoner we—caught."

"*Caught!*" cried Murphy, stepping back.

"Yes. The same jolly and ferocious manner, the same giant bluff."

Murphy started and glared at Phillip. He was wondering about Phillip. He was beginning to suspect intelligence.

"Great game — bluff, isn't it?" smiled Phillip with hard eyes.

"It is possible there is something behind this nonsense," snapped the adventurer, pulling himself together. "If so, a little simple explanation will enlighten me."

"Try again," said Phillip. "There were times, surely, when little brother Murphy was not so dull."

"If you refer to my engagement to Stella," said Murphy, swallowing angrily, "if you refer to the business connected with that I am at . . ."

"That's better," said Phillip paternally. "I thought you'd be able to recall that trifling matter if you made an effort."

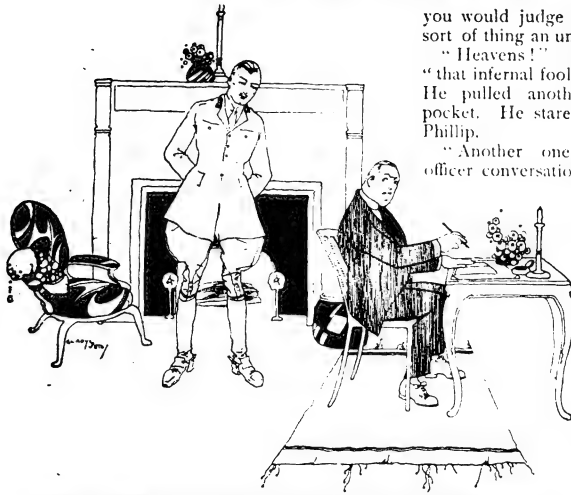
Murphy squared his shoulders. He was still going to fight, but this unexpected young man had jarred him.

"Well?" he growled. "What of that engagement? And what part do *you* play in the business?"

"Oh, no part. No real part. I am just the man that stands on the edge of the crowd and says: 'Uncle Dick, be careful now. Remember little Murphy has led a most gangrenous life. Even a horse-whip, Uncle Dick, can be entirely fatal.'"

"Uncle Dick — horse-whip," stuttered Murphy. "What *are* you talking about?"

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY



"There is paper on the table before you," continued Phillip, as Murphy sat down and took up a pen. "Start 'Dear Mrs. Paton'——"

"Perhaps you know our Uncle Dick," continued Phillip without faltering. "A fiery lad, old-fashioned, of course. Misguided, perhaps. But there you are, that's Uncle. Flies to the horse-whip by natural instinct. What if he *has* thrashed a groom to death in his day, does it stop him? No. He is an incurable horse-whipper, Murphy. An interesting but most ferocious case."

Murphy turned a little livid, but he wasn't beaten yet.

"You daren't go to Uncle Dick—not with those I.O.U.'s."

"Not with the I.O.U.'s, Murphy, as you so wisely say," agreed Phillip softly. "Not with a story like that, but with another kind of story. The story of a mean little blackguard who became engaged to Niece Stella, while all the time another woman——"

Murphy rapped out an oath.

"Another woman—another woman! How do you know? It's a lie."

"Of course," admitted Phillip. "We are all misunderstood, aren't we? But, really, if we want to put the best face on things we shouldn't leave strewn about little articles like this." Phillip took from his pocket a fat envelope, and with an easy gesture he showed it to Murphy. The effect on Murphy was detonative.

"Heavens!" he gasped at last. "Dora's writing!"

"Quite so," murmured Phillip. "Would you like me to read the contents? Perhaps you would judge then whether it is the sort of thing an uncle should know."

"Heavens!" muttered Murphy, "that infernal fool-woman has spoilt——" He pulled another letter out of his pocket. He stared at it and stared at Phillip.

"Another one?" said the young officer conversationally. "But she *does* write frequently, Dora. I noticed the fact from the letter-rack."

Murphy gulped. He felt bad, but he felt he must fight. "I don't care. I defy you," he snarled.

"Oh, do! By all means! The thing I want to interest you in, however, is Uncle Dick. Is Uncle Dick a suitable subject for the defying business? A large, muscular, resolute man, Uncle Dick——"

"Confound you!" the adventurer groaned. "You think you're mighty clever, don't you? If it hadn't been for that woman, though! Well, what do you want?"

"A mere bagatelle. Just an exchange of correspondence. This letter for one you will write. Oh, no, I wouldn't try violence. You were much softer than I just now. That's right, there is paper on the table before you," continued Phillip, as Murphy sat down and took up a pen. "Start 'Dear Mrs. Paton,' —not so much virility, it blots—'Dear Mrs. Paton, I see you are entirely right.

"Yes," said René. . . . "While you've *got* the chance—hop!"

[*Page* 348, *col.* 2.]

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Stella's engagement to me was a mistake, and it must end. Please allow me to release her from her promise to marry me. I will not trouble her or you again. About the little matter of the I.O.U.'s; don't worry yourself about them. Pay as you suggest in your own time and your own way. (No, don't choke, Murphy—or, at least, don't choke until you have your signature down). 'Easy payment will suit me, and, indeed, the suggestion is admirable.' Just sign that, Murphy."

Murphy Noble got to his feet, choking. He held out his hand for the letter which had been his undoing.

"Not so," said Phillip. "I think the initiative is with me. Your letter first, please." He took Murphy's letter, examined it carefully, and pocketed it. Then with a smile he handed Murphy the other. The adventurer snatched at it, tore the contents from the envelope—and exposed *two carefully-folded sheets of blank paper*.

"You thief!" he shouted. "You thief! An envelope from a waste-paper basket and two empty sheets. You've tricked me. You knew nothing about Dora?"

"Not much," said Phillip cheerily. "Not even her name until you so amiably favoured me with it. Of course, I did notice she wrote a good deal and that you habitually scowled at her writing in the letter-rack. Oh, and swore at it too."

"You scoundrel! You tricked me." He advanced on Phillip. Once more from the depths of the library there came a giggle, an unmistakable and silvery giggle, and René followed it out. Murphy did wild, dumb things in rage.

"You here too! I see it now. A cursed plot. A foul plot, and you knew nothing all the time. Played with me and tricked me—and you knew *nothing* at all."

"Very good thing 'nothing,' with a hint or two thrown in," said Phillip. "We've diddled brother Hun on less. Just two and two added together—frequent feminine handwriting in letter-rack, swear words at sight of writing—and—*pouf*—the enemy gets it in the neck. Murphy, you have got it in the neck."

"Confound you! I'll do something. I'll——"

"Yes," said René. "If I were you I would. I'd hop. You're rather a medallist at hoppery, and while you've *got* the chance—hop!"

There was no need for more! Murphy Noble hopped.

Next month Phillip, motoring near the sea coast, meets the inevitable flapper, and with her assistance emerges triumphant from a brief but exciting adventure.

NURSE.

Last April it was Captain Blair,
He had the jolly cheek to do it;
In June—although I took such care—
Lieutenant Freddy, *he* got through it!
And after that each one the same,
There hardly passed a week without it—
"I say, Nurse, will you marry me?"
(I may as well be frank about it!)

Now, what's the use of saying "No!"
The way I did, and blushing for them?
Each one's got wed to someone, so
I might as well have been before them.
I'm sick of marriage-cake, and bells,
And other people's wedding posies;
That's why I mean to answer "Yes!"
To the next patient who proposes!

Ethel Talbot.

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

RASTALL'S REVENGE

By T. C. Bridges.

"I would find grievous ways to have thee slain,
Intense device, and superflux of pain."

I.

Two men walked down the broad street of Moorlands, in the direction of the railway station. One, square-built, stocky, and about forty-five, wore the plain dark uniform of a prison warder; the other, a good deal younger, was in civilian clothes, which hung loosely on his tall, gaunt frame.

Leaving his man on the wind-swept platform, Warder Garbett went into the ticket office and purchased a third single for Paddington. Coming out again, he handed this to the other, who took it without a word.

"Here's a carriage, Rastall," said Garbett. "You won't be troubled with much company this morning," he added drily.

"I don't care what company I have so long as I'm quit of yours," answered Rastall bitterly. His eyes, deep-set under thick eyebrows, glared at the warder with unquenchable hate.

Garbett shrugged his broad shoulders.

"You always were a grouser, Rastall, but why you should lay all your troubles at my door I'm hanged if I know."

Red sparks glowed in Rastall's eyes.

"Liar!" he said in a low, tense voice. "Liar!"

Garbett stared at the man with an expression half-contemptous, half-pitiful.

"What maggot have you got in your brain, Rastall? Your troubles have been of your own making. You can't blame me because you were sentenced to a seven years' stretch."

"No," retorted Rastall fiercely. "That was my own idiotic fault. But it's yours that prison's been hell to me. It's yours that I tried to bunk, and lost my remission. It's yours that I'm no longer a man, but a filthy lag like the rest of the scum in that stone pen on the hill."

He poured out his words with a force and fury that fairly staggered Garbett.

"How do you make that out?" he asked at last.

"So you'd try and humbug me that you'd forgotten?" sneered Rastall. "I suppose you'd tell me it wasn't you who reported me three times the first month I was in, that it wasn't you who got me in the governor's bad books, and had me chucked out of the tin shop into that filthy quarry?"

"If I reported you it was my duty," answered Garbett quietly. "I had no feeling in the matter one way or the other."

"Duty!" snarled Rastall. "That's what your sort always say. Duty, and never a bit of decent feeling or humanity about any of you screws, and you're the worst of the bunch."

The engine whistled. Rastall stepped into his empty carriage, but turning quickly thrust his head through the open window.

"You've made life a hell for me these seven years," he said. "But don't you fancy you're going to get away with it. Some day you and I will meet again. Then—look out!"

The train started with a jerk, and Rastall dropped on to the seat. Garbett stood quite still.

"Barmy!" he muttered frowning, and, turning, walked out of the station and slowly and thoughtfully back to the prison, where, in the busy routine of work, he speedily forgot all about the wild-eyed, bitter-tongued Rastall.

But if Garbett forgot, Rastall did not. He was right when he had said that those seven awful years at Moorlands had changed him into a criminal. They had indeed warped his whole nature, and the one sentiment of which he was now capable was an unquenchable longing for revenge.

During his long term of penal servitude his only near relative, an aunt, had died and left him a little income, just enough to allow him to rent a couple of cheap rooms and live without working. He had not a friend left, and had he had any he would have been too proud to reclaim their acquaintance. Consequently he lived the most lonely life imaginable, and

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

this gave him the more time to brood upon his passion for revenge.

It became a monomania. He thought of it by day, and dreamt of it at night, and always it was Garbett who typified to him the whole system which had crushed his life on the wheel. He remembered, as if it were yesterday, the first offence of which he had been guilty—a failure to clean his cell in time. He remembered how he had begged Garbett not to report him; how Garbett had merely told him to be silent; and the horrible sinking feeling when he found himself carpeted in the office, under the stern eyes of Colonel Peyton, the Governor.

Time after time he was hauled up; time after time he had been punished with cells, "A" diet, and loss of stage and remission, until at last he had become utterly reckless, and, knocking down a warder, made that crazy rush for liberty.

He shivered as he remembered the horrible night, wandering alone in the cruel cold of the high moor, and he burnt with rage at recollection of the "bashing"* which was the first of his punishment, to be followed by six months with black-and-white dress and wearing leg irons day and night.

Oh, he would get even with Garbett—that he swore to himself, and he thought and thought until he had the whole plan ready in his mind.

It was a month, almost to the day, after his release when he left the train at Taviton, seven miles from the prison. But now, instead of the obviously prison-made suit in which he had left Moorlands, he was dressed in Norfolk jacket and knickerbockers, and carried an artist's easel and block. Artists were thick as whortleberries on the Moor. No one would look twice at him.

Next morning, with a small knapsack on his back as well as his painting outfit, he started towards Moorlands.

He made straight across the Moor until he was within sight of Garbett's cottage, which stood about a mile from the prison in a sheltered nook under Western Tor.

An ugly light glowed in his eyes as they fell on the small, granite-built house with its trim garden and beech hedges. Then he sheered off to the right, up the hillside.

A huge pile of reddish dump rose like an unfinished railway embankment. He passed behind, and so up to its summit where a low-browed tunnel gaped black in the scarred face of the tor. It was the main adit to the long-abandoned Western Tor Mine, and the goal for the moment of Rastall's pilgrimage.

He looked carefully around to make sure that no one was watching, then slipped silently into the depths, and was swallowed up in the gloom.

Next day was Sunday, and late that evening Garbett, who was off duty, walked down to the village for a chat with some of his cronies.

It was about eight when he came homewards again. The sun had set, and the moon, only three days off the full, shone brightly in a clear sky.

The road ran steeply up hill, with low stone walls on either side. On the upper, the left-hand side, was a thick fringe of fir trees.

Garbett plodded steadily along, thinking of nothing in particular, except perhaps the cold beef and pickles that would be ready for his supper.

A slight rustle in the trees to the left made him glance in that direction. He could hardly believe his eyes when he saw the head and shoulders of a prisoner peering over the wall a little way ahead.

A prisoner! Yes, not a doubt about it! The shaven face, the Glengarry cap, the red-and-blue striped slop. And yet there had been no word of any escape!

The prisoner turned his head, saw the warder, ducked in a flash, and went crashing away through the undergrowth. With a shout Garbett dashed forward, vaulted the wall and hurled himself in pursuit.

As he cleared the belt of firs he caught sight of the lag running hard up the hillside.

Garbett put his best foot forward, and though he did not seem to gain, at any rate did not lose ground.

The convict went straight up the hill. He was making for the mine dump, and Garbett's spirits rose as he saw him slacken speed over the rough ground.

"Artful beggar!" he panted. "Means to hide."

He spurted as he spoke, and gaining rapidly he reached the top of the dump just in time to see his quarry plunge headlong into the old adit.

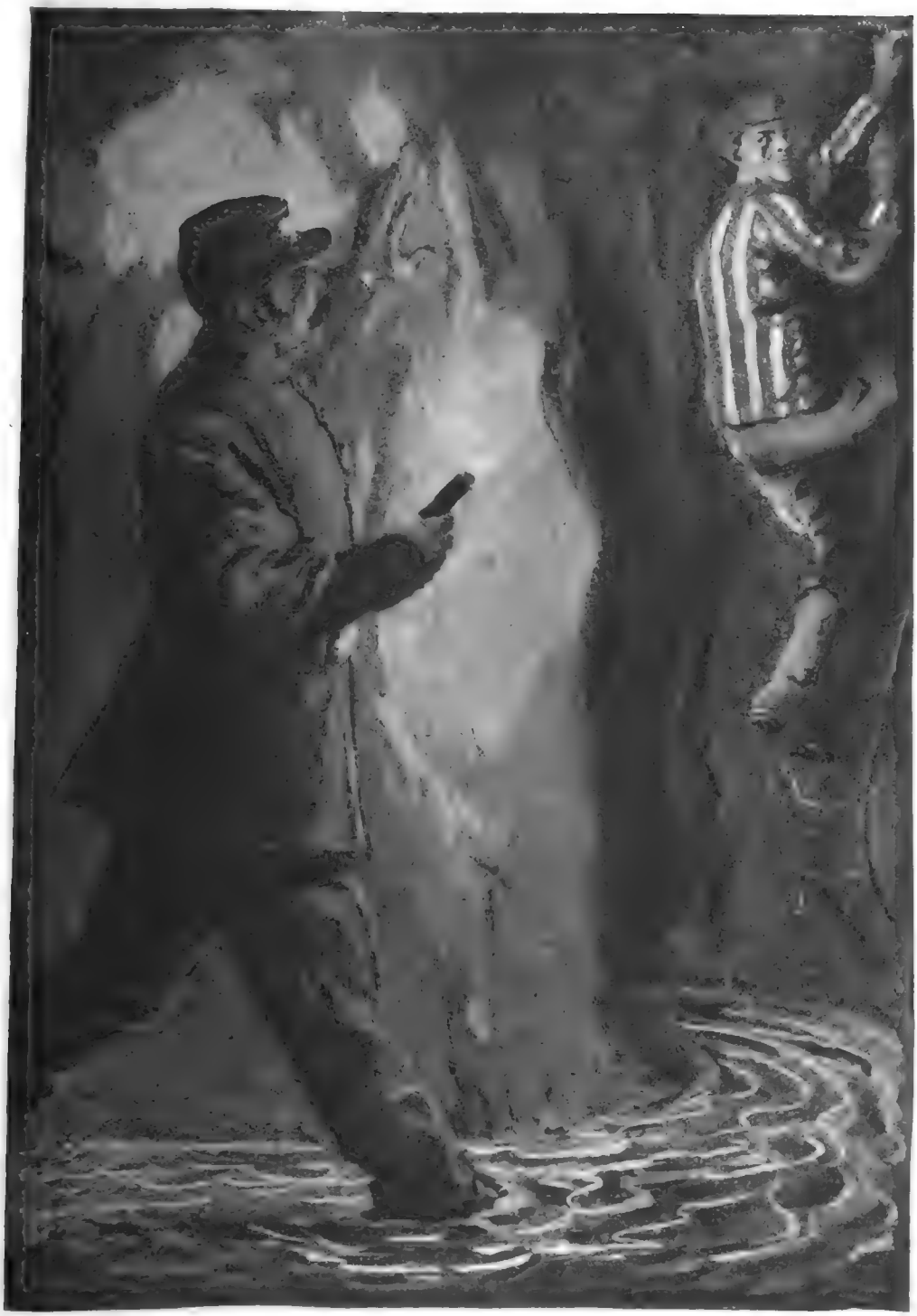
Garbett was not the sort to poke his nose for pleasure into the forgotten galleries which seam every other tor on the Moor. He had never before been inside the Western Mine.

But now he did not hesitate.

Waiting only long enough to switch on the electric torch which he always carried, he ducked his head and went in after. Steps splashing through the slime of the adit floor came plainly to his ears. He hurried forward, and the white light of his lamp fell upon the flying figure of the man before him.

* Prison slang for flogging with cat-o'-nine-tails.

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY



Again the mocking laugh rang out, this time from overhead. He flung his light upwards. Climbing a rope ladder that led to the top of a short shaft, was the lag. "Thought you'd trapped me," he jeered. . . . "But the boot's on the other foot, Mr. Garbett."

[Page 352, col. 1.]

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

"Stop!" he roared. "It's no use your running. I've got you."

The answer was a mocking laugh, and instantly the spider-like shadow vanished.

Spurting again, Garbett reached a cross-cut. Again the mocking laugh rang out, this time from overhead. He flung his light upwards. Climbing a rope ladder that led to the top of a short shaft, was the lag.

"Thought you'd trapped me," he jeered as he reached the top and drew up the ladder. "But the boot's on the other foot, Mr. Garbett. Good-night, Garbett — and good-bye!"

He was gone like a flash.

"Rastall!" gasped Garbett, and, filled with sudden panic, turned and went plunging back towards the mouth of the adit. The slope was steep. He slipped and slithered in the thin slime, and once he struck his head heavily against a rock projecting downwards from the roof. Before he was anywhere near the entrance there came a heavy thud. The thick air shook with the concussion, and at the same moment the patch of pale light which marked the mouth of the adit was suddenly blotted out.

A moment later he was up against a mass of earth and stone which entirely blocked the entrance.

II.

Rastall, after clambering out through the upper adit, ran down the hillside and lit the fuse of the cartridge which was set to close the mouth of the main adit.

Crouching close by, he watched the dynamite do its work, then, chuckling softly, moved away to the niche among the rocks where he had left his clothes.

He changed quickly, and, after burying the convict kit, picked up his easel and paint-box and went striding down the hill.

A fierce exultation filled him. He, the lonely, despised convict, had succeeded beyond all his hopes. At last he was even with his worst enemy, and now Garbett would know some at least of the agonies which he himself had suffered through those awful years.

It was his triumph which made him careless. He came to the wall above the road, jumped lightly on to the top of it, and next moment was lying on his face in the roadway with his left ankle pinned under half a hundredweight of granite.

For the first few seconds he was too stunned to move. Then, as he stirred, a pang of intense agony wrung a scream from his twisted lips, and he fainted.

The next thing he knew he was lying on a couch with a rug over him.

By the light of a shaded lamp he saw a woman sitting beside him. She was middle-aged, but plump and pleasant-faced.

She saw him stir.

"You be better, sir?" she asked.

"Much better, thank you," he answered gratefully.

"I did think of sending my boy for the doctor," she told him, "but seeing there's nothing broke I reckoned to save the money. Would 'ee like a cup of tea, sir?"

"I should, very much," Rastall told her.

"Kettle's boiling. It won't be long," she assured him and went out.

A few minutes later the door opened again, but this time it was not the woman, but a tall, finely-built girl who carried in the tea-tray.

"Mother's asked me to bring you the tea, sir," she said. "She's gone down the road to meet father. He's late like to-night."

As she spoke she laid the tray down, poured out a cup of the steaming brew, and added milk and sugar.

Rastall was staring at her with an odd look in those deep, wild eyes of his.

"Who is your father?" he asked suddenly.

"He's a warder, sir. Garbett is his name."

Rastall made a queer sound in his throat.

"Ah, you're in pain still, sir. I'm proper sorry. Now don't you be moving. I'll put the cup to your mouth."

She slipped her firm, capable young arm under his shoulders, lifted him as easily as a child, and put the cup to his lips. It was years since Rastall had felt the touch of a woman's hand. It gave him the strangest feeling.

"There, that's better," she said soothingly. She had her mother's soft Devon voice, but was clearly much better educated.

She made him drink a full cup of tea and eat a slice of daintily-cut bread and butter. Then she pulled the rug up over him and turned the lamp lower.

"You get a bit of sleep, sir," she said. "If you want anything you've only to call."

She left the room as quietly as she had come, but as for Rastall, sleep was the last thing he thought of. He lay quite still, staring in front of him with unseeing eyes.

He was in Garbett's home. Somehow in all those dreary years during which he had come into every-day contact with the warder he had never imagined him as a man with a home. Vaguely he had known that he was married and had a house, but if he had thought at all of his wife he had fancied her a sour-visaged woman with an acid tongue.

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Children he had never for a moment supposed that Garbett possessed.

He began to look round the room. It was beautifully clean and tidy, the furniture was good, there were neatly-framed photographs on the walls. The contrast between it and his squalid quarters in Guilford Street struck him like a blow.

Then grew the thought that he was beholden to the family of his enemy. The idea was intolerable. He stirred quickly and tried to sit up. The result was a stab of agony which wrenched a groan from him.

Instantly the girl was back again.

"Does it hurt very bad?" she asked, and there was real sympathy in her face. "Dad shall go for the doctor when he comes in. He won't be long now."

"I—I don't want the doctor. I want—that is, it's only the pain in my leg," stammered Rastall, and turned his head away. He could not face those kindly eyes.

There was the sound of the front door opening.

"Annie! Annie!" came a frightened voice.

"Yes, mother," answered the girl, and ran out into the hall-way.

"Annie!" cried Mrs. Garbett. "Annie, your father left Moorlands more than an hour ago. Mr. Parton saw him leave. What can have become of him? I couldn't see anything of him anywhere."

She was nearly crying. Rastall, who could hear every word, was filled with amazement. The idea that anyone could possibly like Garbett well enough to weep over him was a fresh shock.

"Don't you cry, mother," he heard Annie say. "Dad will be all right. The poor gentleman's in pain. You sit with him a bit and I'll run out and look for father. He's not far off, I'll be bound."

Mrs. Garbett came into the room. Her pleasant face was white and strained and tears brimmed in her eyes.

"I'm right sorry to hear you be so bad, sir. I wish my husband was back. He'd know what to do better than me. A wonderful man he be for oils and herbs. Good as any doctor, I often says. But we don't know what's come to him to-night. And—and I'm terribly afeared something's wrong."

A sob burst from her, and suddenly she dropped down in a chair beside Rastall's couch and covered her face with her hands.

Rastall jerked himself up to a sitting position. "Don't!" he cried wildly. "Don't! I can't stand it."

Mrs. Garbett's hands dropped. She stared at him.

"You be mazed," she said gently. "You lie down, sir. I've no right to go worrying you like that."

It was the last straw. That she could think of him when in such trouble herself finished Rastall. Like a mist rent by a wind the black fog of hatred which had so long obscured the man's real self was torn away.

"It's my fault," he said fiercely, "my fault. No, I'm not raving. Listen to me."

The words poured from him like a torrent. He told her everything, making no excuse for himself.

When he had finished he sat silent with bent head, waiting for the expected reproaches.

None came.

"You poor man!" was all she said. "I be main sorry for 'ee. Annie and I'll take the rope and go and get James out."

III.

Left to himself, Rastall lay awhile listening to the footsteps of the two women hurrying up the road.

As soon as they had died away he lifted himself off the couch. The blood running to his injured ankle made him sick with pain. But he stuck to it. He was not going to be in the house when Garbett arrived. Somehow he got as far as the hall. He found two sticks, and with their help limped away out of the garden. Darts of intense agony ran up and down his leg. It was sheer will power that took him as far as the road.

Then his head went quite suddenly. He snatched at the gate-post, missed it, collapsed, and for the second time that evening fainted dead away.

So Garbett found him as he came down the hill with his wife and daughter. He stared down at him a moment with a queer look on the face which Rastall had always thought so hard.

"You're not angry with him, James?" questioned his wife.

"Angry! Bless you, no! What's the use of getting angry with a chap that's looney, Mary?"

"He had his senses right enough when he told me where you was," declared Mrs. Garbett.

"Aye, and 'twas you brought him back to 'em, I reckon, missis," replied Garbett with a smile. "You and Annie between you."

"Maybe we could bring him back to 'em proper," said Mary Garbett, and there was a touch of eagerness in her voice.

Garbett paused a moment.

"Reckon I'll give you a chance to try," he responded, and, stooping, lifted Rastall gently and carried him into the house.

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Wanted! A Fighting Faith.

The Rev. F. H. Gillingham, author of the following arresting article.

By the Rev. F. H. Gillingham.

"How many stalwarts, I wonder, has the old Church lost because she insists that before she allows men to partake of her bounties, they must believe her creed?" asks the Rev. F. H. Gillingham, the well-known Rector of Bermondsey, in the following striking article. Mr. Gillingham goes on to plead for a simple, straightforward re-statement of the Church's creed to which people can honestly affirm, and for a fuller recognition of the fact that conformity to existing creeds is valueless without loyal service and devotion to the ordinary duties of everyday life.

Nearly everyone is convinced that the Church has failed. We have heard it proclaimed by the man in the street and by the man in the pulpit, by the man who takes delight in its failure and by the man who, with genuine sympathy, realises that somehow or other all is not well. We are almost tired of hearing it, but we have yet to hear of something really constructive.

We are tinkering with the old constitution. We are seeking for new powers. We want Life, Liberty, and although I am convinced we are "on the move," yet in ecclesiastical circles things move so slowly that it may be many years before any appreciable change is seen.

The Standpoint of the Ordinary Man.

The longer I live the more I am sure that the ordinary man is not non-religious. He is not outwardly in sympathy with the existing forms of religion, but some kind of religion he undoubtedly has. He bows his head before God the Creator. While being unable to assent fully to the Virgin Birth, he yet sees that Jesus Christ is perfect man, and though he can't explain it yet he has a hazy idea that in some way or other He is uniquely endowed with Divinity. The Holy Spirit is more or less an enigma to him, but he cannot get away from the fact of what Mr. Wells calls "an indwelling God."

If I am right in the above assumption, haven't we here a sufficient basis for a Fighting Faith which men can embrace and from which they can start?

It is required of every person who stands as a godparent, and everyone who by confirmation is admitted to the sacred mysteries of the Holy Communion, that he "should steadfastly believe all the articles of the Christian Faith." He says he does, but I am convinced that few really do, and I am sure the time is over-ripe for the Church to re-state her Faith.

Some of us have no difficulty in accepting the Creed as it stands, though when we are asked to explain it we take elaborate pains to prove that it doesn't mean what it seems to say. What, for instance, does "I believe in the Resurrection of the Body" convey to the ordinary Church member? He has said it so frequently that he has ceased to think about it, but when confronted by an inquirer who asks about those who have been blown to unfindable atoms by a direct hit from a shell, he immediately begins to realise that he doesn't really believe what for years he has solemnly said he does believe.

The Real Essentials of the Church.

If, instead of "I believe in the Resurrection of the Body," he could say, "I believe in a larger and fuller life," a life unhampered by the conditions of everyday existence, a life which is essentially spiritual, into which in some way we carry our present character or personality, I believe it would come within the range of our reasonable faith, and also I believe it embraces all that the Church requires us to maintain. If this is so, why in the name of commonsense doesn't the Church either rewrite her Creed or give us an additional one expressed in terms which cease to irritate and to which a man can honestly affirm?

There are few men who have at one bound leapt into the literary world as Donald Hankey has done. His book, "The Student in Arms," has been read by thousands.

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Those of us who were privileged to know him realised that his outstanding trait was an uncompromising honesty. Shortly before he left England for the last time he wrote me a letter, from which I quote. He writes:

"Don't let your vision of Christ or other people's vision get crowded over, blocked up, obscured by vain disputations about embryology, historical criticism, and metaphysics. The important questions are not, as so many think: Was He Virgin born? Was He a wonder worker? Did His body rise? No, the important questions are: Had He perfect liberty? Was it because He knew God? Did He bring forgiveness and new life to men? Is He alive now? Will He be my Master? Can I be forgiven and enter the Kingdom?

The answer is found not by arguing but by trying."

Surely Donald Hankey is right? Men are tired to death of all the old high-sounding phrases and catch-words, of the old subtleties of debate and hair-splittings of the past centuries.

They may have served their purpose, but that purpose is not so pressing to-day, and we want a simple, straightforward re-statement of the facts that are necessary to salvation.

Deeds *versus* Beliefs.

We look in vain through the Gospels for any creed that our Lord imposed. His "belief" for men was never divorced from "doing," and it is a remarkable fact that the two glimpses we get of "judgment" and the next world are eloquently silent as to what men believed, but are very insistent as to what men did.

The well-known story of Dives and Lazarus is valuable to us because it shows us the Gospel condemnation of a man who had the means of assisting and loving his poor brother, but who tied up his purse-strings and failed to sympathise with one who was powerless to help himself.

Dives stands condemned in the eyes of the Great Eternal, not for any wrong creed, but for neglecting the ordinary duties of every-day life.

The Test of Christianity.

The other passage is in S. Matthew xxv. There the sheep are placed on the right hand and the goats on the left, and the test is: Did you go to him in sickness, visit him in prison, clothe his nakedness, relieve his destitution? If the answer was yes, then your acts of love were taken as if they were done to Christ Himself. If the answer was in the negative, then any amount of worship and inter-conformity to existing creeds was valueless.

I know someone will immediately say that I am cutting away one of the Foundations of Christianity, viz., that a man is saved by Faith, by belief. My answer would be that I am anxious to do away with "Faith in a Creed." I wish to emphasise "Faith in Jesus," and there is no "Faith in Jesus Christ" which doesn't express itself in doing.

So that the pious belief which passes the test of "orthodoxy," but which gives no evidence of feeding, helping, clothing, visiting, etc., which in a word gives no evidence of the works of Christ, is something which in spite of its orthodoxy is quite unchristian.

Where Do Our Heroes Stand?

And now I come to a more difficult question still, namely, the brave deeds done by the men in this war who profess no religious belief. Are they outside the pale of Christianity because they are outside the pale of the Church? It is a question that no man can answer, but of this I am convinced, that many of them are men who in the supreme act of their life manifest—perhaps unwittingly—just that trait which is most upheld by the Founder of Christianity Himself. If two words could sum up the Master's teaching, surely those two words would be self-sacrifice?—and what self-sacrifice we have seen from these very men who have nothing to do with our creeds! Their selflessness seems to carry us right back to Calvary—men who, in the words of the great disciple, "loved not their lives unto the death."

The Man of No Professed Belief.

We gain nothing by cheapening a cause, and any attempt to enrol nominal members at the cost of sincere conviction is, of course, doomed to failure. But I have known of more than one man, and of one man in particular, who professed no religion of any kind, who, if questioned, would probably have said he was an Atheist or Agnostic. He wished to join a college mission which was situated in some slum of one of our great centres, and considerable doubts were raised as to his suitability. Could a man who made no profession of any belief be allowed to take part in work which was essentially based on traditional Christianity? Happily he was allowed to join.

At first he felt strange, but he was keen to pick up experience, and so he went in and out of the clubs, visited the boys in their homes, went and saw them in their sickness, had a sympathetic ear for their complaints. He became fascinated. He found he was doing work which really counted. The little chapel where evening prayers were held (and to which he went just because the boys were expected to go) spoke eloquently of a Peace

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

and a Power to both of which he was a stranger; gradually, however, he became conscious of an awakening of his own higher life, and to-day he stands out as one of the grandest men I know. He is looked up to by scores of fellows. He has locked up in his memory the confidences, the aspirations, the failures of many a poor East-Ender. Few priests with all their confessionals have his secret knowledge. He has stood beside sick beds and they were cheerful, on foreign lands and they were at home, by struggling men and they were patient in their larger hope, by poverty and it was rich.

The old chapel to-day is never so inspiring as when he takes it, and had he not been allowed to join because of his "views," the Church would have lost one of her greatest stalwarts.

The Barrier of Creed.

How many stalwarts, I wonder, has the old Church lost because she insists that before she allows men to partake of her bounties they must believe her creed, which is so involved that even an experienced theologian finds considerable difficulty in "squaring" it with his experience and his intelligence.

It seems to me we have put the cart before the horse. You are admitted to the great University of Oxford by passing "Smalls." Having shown your capacity for a fuller education you are allowed to proceed further, and after instruction and application you become sufficiently competent to pass "Mods" and "Greats," and eventually come down a fully-fledged graduate. The same thing applies to the Army and to any commercial house. You enter in order that you may become efficient, but the Church is different.

Certainly she has an "entrance examination," but that takes place when the child is so young that he understands nothing. Then at fourteen or so, when he begins to think, the Church says before you are allowed any further you must unreservedly say that you believe all the articles of the Christian Faith, and though a good many do say they believe yet a far greater number refrain from joining.

Of those who do join, how many are found firm believers after a few years knocking about in the world, during which time many of them feel that their belief was a mere formality? No longer being able to "swallow" all the so-called Christian tenets, they, in common honesty, withdraw from having anything to do with a system which may be quite orthodox, but savours to them too much of hypocrisy.

The Goal of Christian [illegible].

Hasn't the time come when we [illegible] have a far simpler creed which men [illegible] honestly believe and *from* which men [illegible] on to "fuller knowledge yet and [illegible] deeper teaching." So that the present [illegible] instead of meeting us at the beginning [illegible] be the ultimate goal of our Christian [illegible] ence. If a man believes in Jesus C[illegible] he realises that Love is to be the ke[illegible] his life, not love for himself but l[illegible] others, should not that be sufficient [illegible] entrance into the Church? For an ad[illegible] even to the Sacrament? And may [illegible] justly hope that from that small be[illegible] he will go on until he comes to the [illegible] of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

I recall to mind some well-know[illegible] which aptly express my meaning:

> I have a life with Christ to live,
> But 'ere I live it must I wait,
> Till learning can clear answer give
> To this or that book's date?
> I have a life in Christ to live,
> I have a death in Christ to die,
> And must I wait till silence give
> All doubts and full reply?
>
> Nay rather while the sea of doubt
> Is raging wildly round about,
> Questioning of life and death and sin
> Let me but creep within
> Thy fold, O Christ, and at Thy feet
> Take but the lowest seat,
> And hear Thine awful voice repeat
> In gentlest accents heavenly sweet:
> "Come unto Me and rest,
> Believe Me and be blest."

The Need for a Simple Faith.

Man, I repeat, speaking generally, [illegible] anti-religious, but he is anti-creeds. [illegible] willing to give attention to a simple [illegible] he cannot do without his priest, bu[illegible] simple Faith must be something [illegible] different from the Athanasian Creed [illegible] his priest must not be steeped in [illegible] siastical archaisms.

I cannot close better than by once [illegible] quoting Donald Hankey.

"For my own part I can truly say t[illegible] spite of much unfaithfulness and slack[illegible] have never once prayed for guidance w[illegible] getting it, and never once tried to [illegible] Christ without reaping an undreamt-o[illegible] vest of love and peace.

"When I think of myself as I le[illegible] Theological College (he once thoug[illegible] taking "orders") self-centred, solitary [illegible] wretched; and when I think what I hav[illegible] in the way of friendship and love and [illegible] of mind and hope, and this in spite of [illegible] slidings innumerable, I simply gasp [illegible] become inarticulate."

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

[Mr. Gillingham's plea for a simpler religious belief expressed in easily comprehensible terms voices a feeling that is growing more and more prevalent among thinking people of to-day. Convinced that the views of other eminent clergymen would lend additional interest to this striking article, I have sent proofs of it to: The Archbishop of Canterbury, The Bishop of London, Dean Inge, The Bishop of Birmingham, Bishop Welldon, Prebendary Carlile, the Rev. R. J. Campbell, Dr. Robert Horton, Dr. J. Fort Newton, the Rev. Dinsdale T. Young, the Rev. A. C. Dixon, the Rev. R. C. Gillie, and the Rev. F. B. Meyer.

I publish below the letters I have received, and should welcome the views of my readers on this very vital subject.—*Editor R.M.*]

The Rev. R. C. GILLIE, M.A., *Minister of Marylebone Presbyterian Church*, writes:

I have enjoyed reading the Rev. F. H. Gillingham's paper with its breeziness and directness, but this is what strikes me as so strange. What he advocates is just what the Free Churches have preached and have asked from those who became members, during the last quarter of a century at any rate. Allegiance to Jesus Christ, trust in Him and loyalty to Him—that is the total requirement, plus in many cases baptism in infancy or adult life.

This fact, of which Mr. Gillingham seems unaware, suggests two things:

1. Evidently something more is required for a fighting faith, for none of us Free Churchmen will claim a striking success for our own churches of late, and some people would say they have failed worse than the Church of England.

2. Seeing that we are at least agreed about this great essential, cannot we come closer together in this day of deep demand and destiny? Isn't it a united front, and if not that yet, a recognition of the same spirit wherever it is to be found, which will help the man outside, the "almost folk who hurt our hopes" to come within?

BISHOP WELLDON, *Dean of Manchester*, says in reply:

I have read Mr. Gillingham's article. I do not entirely agree with it; he seems to me to make too little of creeds. If the history of the Church teaches any lesson it teaches, I think, that an excessive creed like the Roman Catholic is far more valuable as a fighting instrument than a meagre creed like the Unitarian. But Mr. Gillingham is, I think, right in holding that the Church, if she is to win and hold the allegiance of working people, must be definite in faith, practical in action, and beneficent in her influence upon the life of the nation. . . .

I like to think of the Church as the great reforming, regenerating power in the modern world. I want her members, and still more her ministers, to gain by their enlightenment and self-sacrifice the confidence of all classes of the nation, and not least of the poorest and humblest class. I want them to plead for all who are tempted or oppressed, for all who do not get a fair chance of living healthy and happy lives.

The Church should help the people to do right, yet should not shrink from telling them when they are wrong. She must show them the value of her offices and her sacraments through the lives of churchmen and churchwomen. She must enter into sympathy as far as possible with all "who profess and call themselves Christians." She must hold up the banner of truth, of justice, of righteousness, of purity in the State. . . .

The Rev. DINSDALE T. YOUNG, *Minister of Central Hall Wesleyan Methodist Church, Westminster*, writes:

I do not think the article on "A Fighting Faith" will go far to solve the problem it discusses.

To evacuate Christianity of its essential elements is not the way to promote its progress. Salvation by a personal penitent trust in the Atonement of the Divine Lord is the fundamental thing about Christianity.

The condition of Salvation never varies; it is never welcome to human nature, but it appeals with all its old effectiveness to penitent hearts at home or on the battlefields.

Let it be preached more urgently and lovingly in the Church, and the Church will recover itself.

DR. ROBERT HORTON, M.A., *of Lyndhurst Road Congregational Church, Hampstead*, sends the following:

I thank you for sending me Mr. Gillingham's article. I have read it with care; and I find myself in absolute accord with the writer. If the leaders of the Church will follow this lead, a new day dawns for religion in our country. The Creeds are invaluable as the summaries of the things most surely believed up to the ninth century of our era, but when they are put in any way before the Gospel, and made the gate through which men to-day are to approach the Gospel, they are purely mischievous.

Men are not saved by an intellectual assent to the Creeds; it was the great mistake which Greek Thought made in invading the Eastern Church, to shift religion to an intellectual basis.

Men are saved by believing Christ. Christ is not a formula, or a series of highly arguable propositions, but a living Power, who was once among us in the days of His Flesh, and is in the Spirit even with us and accessible still. Directly a man believes in Him, and sets about to act in conformity with what Jesus said and did, he takes the first step towards a full Christian life, and *by going on* will eventually arrive at the propositions contained in the Creeds. . . .

The Rev. A. C. DIXON, *Minister of the Metropolitan Tabernacle*, says:

The author of this article evidently holds tenaciously to the creed that one need not have a creed. He believes that belief does not matter. His deepest conviction seem to be that no one need have any convictions. Life consists in doing, not believing.

In this I believe he is mistaken, though he represents a rather large current of modern thinking. "As a man thinketh so is he." A man is not saved by deed but by creed. Such is the teaching of Jesus Christ, and to reject him as Supreme Authority is to put one's self outside the pale of Christianity. "Faith in Jesus," as one would have faith in Gladstone or Lloyd George saves nobody; but faith in Jesus as "The Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world," saves anybody, good or bad. If one depends on salvation by deeds, he either has a very low estimate of what salvation means or a very high estimate of his own deeds. A low estimate of what salvation means does not make high character, and a high estimate of one's deeds produces only pharisaism. . . .

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

THE SEPTEMBER CAP AND BELLS.

HALF AND HALF.

With a despairing grin on his red visage the Sergeant confronted the knock-kneed recruit.

"You ——— !" he roared.

Just then the Captain passed and inquired the reason of his subordinate's wrath.

"I've tried an' tried!" yelled the Sergeant, "an' I can't git 'im to look smart. See 'im now! The top 'alf of 'is legs is standin' to attention an' the bottom 'alf is standin' at ease!"

FA(I)RE ADVICE.

The seedy-looking man took his seat at the table and scanned the menu.

"Waiter, I've only elevenpence on me. Now what would you recommend?"

The waiter gently removed the card from his would-be patron's grasp.

"Another restaurant," he said.

APT!

The curate was learning to ride a bicycle, and in a misplaced fit of zeal set off quite alone. He thought he could manage by himself, so started downhill in a somewhat wobbly manner.

The road was wet and muddy, and it was not long before the machine had skidded, and the curate was floundering in the mud.

A youthful member of the Sunday-school watched the catastrophe with evident pleasure.

"Here endeth the first lesson," he chortled.

SEEKING SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE.

MEDIUM: "The spirit of your wife is here now; do you wish to speak to her through me?"

WIDOWER: "Ask her where the dickens she put my summer underwear."

MARY ANNE.

Oh, listen to the tale I tell
Of Mary Anne, my treasure;
I prized her; she was treated well;
I loved her without measure.
When all my friends were servantless,
And dinnerless—(to quote 'em)—
She stayed with me; a wonder, she;
A very prize factotum!

Perhaps my lucky stars declined,
Or altered their positions,
But anyhow, she "changed her mind,"
And went to make munitions.
Serving last night at my canteen
I met the fickle fairy:
And "Coffee, 'ere! Look spry, my dear!"
To me said Mistress Mary!

Ethel Talbot.

DOCTOR: "I'm glad you are better, Miss Jones. Are you continuing the medicine?"

MISS JONES: "Well, Doctor, I've given up the medicine, but I still stick to your plasters."

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

A SOCIAL TRIUMPH.

There may be more than one just cause for pride in the soul of the small boy at the close of his first day at school.

"How did you get on with your spelling?" little Jimmy's mother asked him. "You look so pleased, I'm sure you did well."

"No, I couldn't spell much of anything," admitted Jimmy. "And I couldn't remember the 'rithmetic very well, nor the joggerphy."

The mother's face wore a look of disappointment, but Jimmy had reserved the choice morsel which was sure to raise a sensible parent to heights of appreciative joy.

"But that's no matter, mother," he said, bestowing a bear's hug upon her; "the boys all like me, and I've got the biggest feet in the class!"

They say that if the fairies hear you piping in the sun,
They all come out and sing and dance, and have no end of fun,
But though I steal out each fine day, and sometimes when it's wet,
And play my very best to them, I've never seen them yet.

BANG!

"Why do the roses fade so slowly?" she inquired poetically.

"Well," replied the bald-headed young man with wide ears, "when you think it over, it's all for the best. It's more comfortable to have them fade slowly than to go off all of a sudden like a torpedo."

THE LIE OF THE LAND.

"In what direction does the village lie, my friend?"

"Well, sir, it's liable to lie in any old direction that comes handy, but at this time of the year it's mostly about fish."

THE THREE ALTERNATIVES.

"You'll have to do one of three things," said the portly ticket-examiner.

The ticketless passenger looked up insolently, and said:

"Well?"

"Show your ticket, pay your fare, or git off," answered the official.

"And you, too, my friend," said the passenger, seriously, "will have to do one of three things."

"Well?" queried the portly one.

"Walk more," retorted the passenger, "eat less, or bust!"

And by the time the ticket-examiner had recovered, the train had left the station.

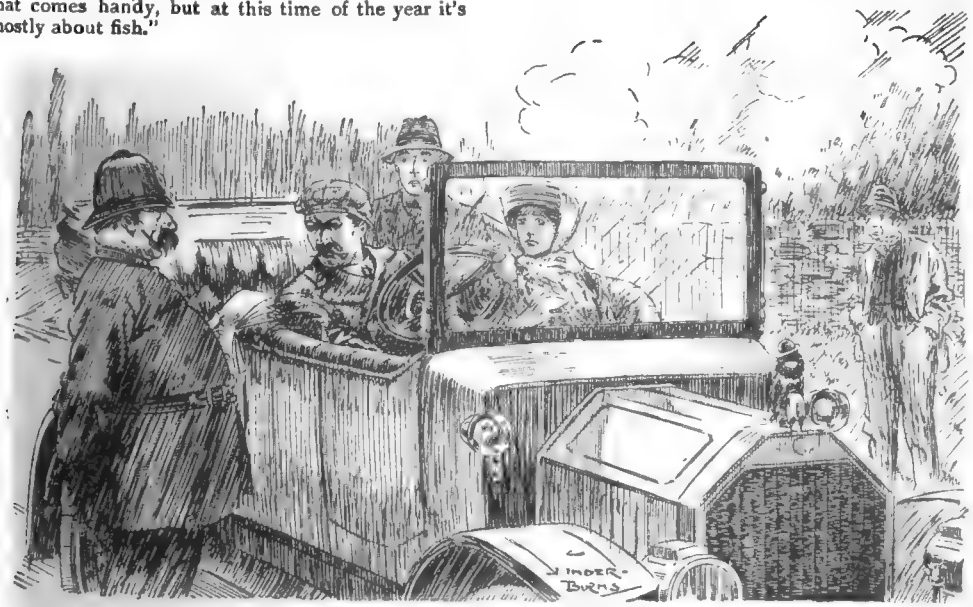
A HARD NUT TO CRACK.

The last edition of the newspapers, with the result of the *cause célèbre*, had been sold out, and the boys were calculating their takings.

"'Ullo," said Jimmy, in alarm, "I'm a 'apenny short!"

"Well, what's the use of 'arping on it?" growled Dick, as he calmly cracked a nut; "you don't think I took it, do you?"

"No, I don't say you 'ave," said Jimmy, slowly—"I don't say you 'ave. But there it is. I'm a 'apenny short, and you're a-eating nuts, yer know!"



EXCEEDING THE LIMIT.

POLICEMAN (*who has lost his pencil*): "*Now, sir, if you'll lend me a bit of blacklead, I'll take your name and number.*"

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

A BORN FIGHTER.

VISITOR: "How delighted you must have been when you heard your son had won the V.C.!"

SCOTCH WIFE: "O aye! I was pleased enough, but I wasna surprised. He stood up to me once!"

DOGGING HIS FOOTSTEPS.

As a man entered a picture gallery the attendant tapped him on the shoulder, and, pointing to a small cur that followed him, said:

"Dogs are not admitted."

"That's not my dog," replied the visitor.

"But he follows you."

"So do you!" replied the old gentleman sharply.

The attendant growled, and removed the dog with entirely unnecessary violence.

A SMALL MISTAKE.

Belinda made a cake one day,
For which much praise to her is due,
With lots of butter, sugar, eggs,
And plums galore, and cherries too;
It really was a first-class cake—
She only made one small mistake.

Belinda made a lovely cake;
Where is the cake Belinda made?
Oh, hush! we gave it to the dog,
He will be ill, I'm much afraid;
Belinda wasted half-an-hour—
Alas! she quite forgot the flour!

Elsie Skeet.

ONCE BITTEN, TWICE SHY.

FOND MOTHER: "Who's Mother's darling?"
WARY CHILD: "I'm not, if it's anything upstairs."

STRIKINGLY SYMPATHETIC.

STRIKER: "What's that y' say? Yer stopped takin' in washin'?"

WIFE: "Certainly I 'ave. I struck in sympathy with you and yer mates."

AN INOPPORTUNE MOMENT.

Night was coming on, the storm was increasing, and some of the deck fittings had already been swept overboard, when the Captain decided to send up a distress signal. The rocket was already lit and about to ascend, when a solemn-faced passenger stepped up.

"Cap'n," said he, "I'd be the last man on earth to cast a damper on any man's patriotism; but it seems to me this here's no time for letting off fireworks."

SOME PLATES!

"You, boy, over in the corner," cried the man at the desk.

The boy over in the corner shot up like a bolt.

"Answer this," continued the examiner. "Do we eat the flesh of the whale?"

"Yee-y-yes, sir," faltered the boy.

"And what," pursued the examiner, "do we do with the bones?"

"Please, sir," responded the boy, "we l-leave them on the sides of our p-plates."

A CASE FOR THE CHAPLAIN.

SERGEANT: "What religion?"

BILL: "Nuthin'."

SERGEANT: "I must put you down something."

BILL: "Right-o! Put me dahn 'eathen."

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

: A RESTAURANT TRAGEDY :

WHAT HAPPENED WHEN JONES WENT TO LUNCH EARLY.

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

PROFESSING TOO MUCH.

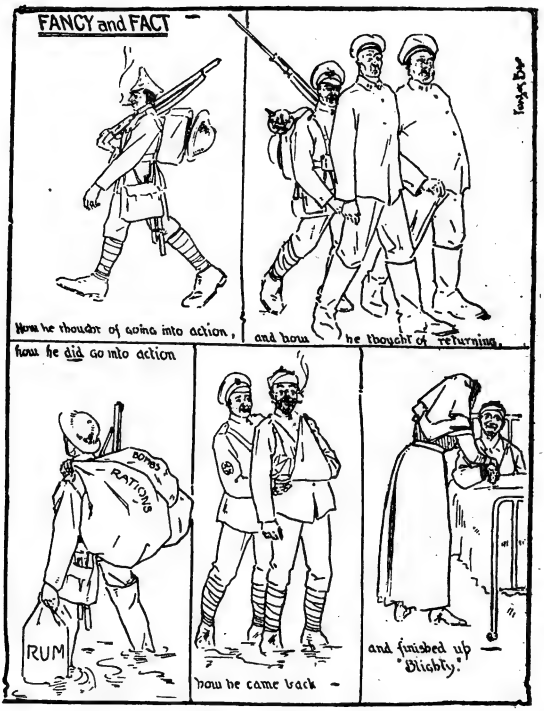
"My dear lady, I go further than believing in woman suffrage; I maintain that man and woman are equal in every way."

"Oh, professor! Now you're bragging."

CHECKMATE.

HOSTESS: "But when you got so far north that the nights were three months long, it must have been inexpressibly dreary. How did you put in your time?"

ARCTIC EXPLORER: "Madam, we devoted the evening to a game of chess."


FANCY and FACT
how he thought of going into action,
and how he thought of returning.
how he did go into action
how he came back
and finished up "Blighty."
RATIONS
RUM

HOW IT'S DONE.

"*Mon Dieu*, Henri! You have spoil the omelette."

"You talk foolishment, Alphonse! A good *chef* never spoil anything. I have invent a new dish."

TURN AND TURN ABOUT.

"That coat looks shabby," remarked Hicks to his intimate friend the poet. "Why don't you have it turned?"

"Do you think this coat has three sides?" asked the impecunious one sadly, and nothing more was said on the subject.

LIVENING THINGS UP.

LADY BOUNTIFUL: "Well, Mrs. Higginbottom, and how are you getting on? Won't you have another piece of bread and butter?"

OLD VILLAGER (with an eye to the ham sandwiches): "Well, mum, if it's all the same to you, I'd rather 'ave a taste o' summat as had drored breath."

PLAYING THE GAME.

The new vicar had organised a football club and the band was on the field to celebrate the occasion of its opening game—a match, Married *v.* Single. The Benedicks, mainly by the aid of one, Nupkins, were leading by two goals at half-time. Just as they were about to restart, news arrived of a local railway accident, with fatal results.

"I'm in a bit of quandary, sir," observed Nupkins to the vicar. "My missus was in that there train."

"Dear me, Nupkins, I'm sorry to hear it!" was the reply. "You're naturally anxious to get away."

"No, no, sir, it ain't that!" observed the possibly bereaved one; "I was only thinking that if anything happened to Emma I ought to be playing for the single chaps this half, so I thought as 'ow it'd be better, till we hear for certain, if I referees."

STRIKING A BARGAIN.

Two ingenious passengers boarded the car. One carried two mangle rollers under his arm. The other deposited a large iron casting under the steps and then came upstairs with a sack of wheels and fittings. The guard stood speechless as he watched the schemers moving a mangle for nothing. Then he came upstairs for the fares.

"Two 'a'pennies," said the roller bearer.

"Make it pennies," quoth the sarcastic guard, "and I'll stop the car while you run back for the wash-tub and clothes-props!"

THE FESTAL DAY.

"Have you a piece of cake, lady, to give a poor man who hasn't had a bite for two days?" was the unusual request made by a disreputable-looking tramp.

"Cake?" said the woman in surprise. "Isn't bread good enough for you?" She looked at him coldly, but he did not flinch.

"Ordinarily, yes, ma'am; but this is my birthday!" explained the tramp.

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

ICED·DRINKS

By Charles Dixon Dixon.

"Why should every creature drink but I?
Why, man of morals, tell me why?"

Lieutenant Jim sat in an angle of a battered German trench into which the summer sun of Picardy smote down with all its noontide splendour. If there was any suspicion of a breeze the deep trench effectively concealed it. Parapet and parados reflected and contained the heat. Jim's steel helmet protected his head and shielded his eyes somewhat from the glare. His life in Southern China had taught him to respect the sun. He had come to regard his helmet as an excellent solar topee. He fanned himself with his map-case and perspired at every pore.

The smell of the charnel-house was everywhere. The nauseating stench of the battlefield, intensified by the pitiless sun, gripped his throat. The hum of myriad flies outvied in volume the continuous hum of aeroplanes overhead. With a sigh he stood up to catch a breath of air and to gaze again through a gap in the parapet. Before him the ground sloped gently down to Guillemont and then as gently up to Ginchy. There was nothing to see—only the crater-torn surface of the ground stretching like a desert to where the few remaining walls of Ginchy danced in the heat haze along the horizon.

A cloud of flies had settled on the spot where he had been sitting. "Confound it!" said Jim. "I've been sitting on a half-buried Boche." The corpse had evidently been hastily buried in the parapet and then partially disinterred by the shell which had made the gap through which he was looking.

He kicked some earth over the spot, dispersing the flies and disclosing a torn note-book.

"Good biz!" he said, picking it up. "Boche officer's note-book or diary by the look of it. I'll dip into it when I've found a more salubrious spot to rest in."

Lieutenant Jim, whose real name was Charles James, but who was universally called Jim for short, was in the Machine Gun Corps. He had spent the morning posting his guns to the best advantage. The gun teams were now busy digging themselves in. Jim and his servant Anderson, who also acted as his orderly, had walked and pushed and crawled and squirmed their way through trench and traverse, mine crater and shell hole, from dawn till noon. Their thick cloth tunics and heavy fighting equipment had become an almost intolerable burden. Jim, who had left a business in China to become a temporary soldier, had brought some of the Chinaman's patience with him. When he sat down in the angle of the captured German trench he had promised himself a nap while his men were consolidating the position. But the flies and the heat had exhausted even his patience.

He pocketed the note-book and shook the shoulder of his drowsy servant.

"Come on, Anderson, we'll go back towards Brigade Headquarters, and the first decent, shady bit of trench we come to I'm going to stop there and have a snooze. I'd sell my soul for a cool drink now," he added, "but that's out of the question."

"Yes, sir," said Anderson, a Cockney born and bred, swinging his rifle over his shoulder. "I knows of a little pub near King's Cross where I'd like to be just now."

"A pub!" cried Jim. "Good heavens, man, I'm beginning to think I was a fool ever to leave Shanghai. There's a club there with a cool marble floor, electric fans, and the longest bar in the world. And there are men there at this moment drinking cool drinks out of long tumblers with ice, man, ice clinking against the sides!"

"Yes, sir," said Anderson absently, conjuring up the vision of his own particular pub.

They had just found a quiet corner of the communication trench when the Brigade-Major came along, bent on taking a look at the lie of the land during the midday lull in the artillery duel.

"Good morning, Jim."

"Good morning, sir."

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

"Have you got your guns into position yet?"

"Yes, sir. They are digging themselves in now. You'll see them as you go along the line. I hope the Brigadier is in a good temper, sir?"

"He's not. Says he's longing for just one cold drink."

"That's funny. I was just offering my soul for one myself. If ever you come to Shanghai after the war, sir, I can promise you the finest iced drink you could wish for."

"Iced! Good Lord, if you could offer the Brigadier one now, he'd recommend you for the Military Cross straight off."

A couple of hours later the increasing intensity of the artillery fire woke Lieutenant Jim. He had dreamt he stood in front of an endless row of long tumblers, into each of which a Chinese boy quietly dropped chunks of ice from a glistening pail. He rubbed his eyes and brushed the flies away. Then, remembering the thirst his dream had intensified, took a pull at the lukewarm contents of his water bottle and cursed softly to himself. Anderson stirred uneasily, and finally woke with a start as a 5·9 crashed into the wood behind.

"Been dreaming, Anderson?"

"Yes, sir. I dreamt I was a boy again. I'd pinched a chunk of ice from a fishmonger's slab. Just as I was going ter swaller it, that there shell woke me up."

Jim grinned. "We're getting ice on the brain. Let's try to forget it. It will be cooler towards evening." But meanwhile the afternoon sun seemed hotter than ever. Its slanting rays smote full on their backs as the two men leant against the parapet watching our "heavies" beginning to plaster Guillemont. Jim felt in his pocket for his pipe and came across the German's notebook.

"Hullo!" he said. "I must dip into this; there may be something interesting. I think I can remember enough German to get the hang of it. Let's see, it seems to belong to Captain of Infantry, Koch, and he's been having a rough time of it ever since the Big Push in July began. Humph! Doesn't like our artillery fire, judging from his frequent references to it. 'Had to dig feverishly.' Well, I should hope so. . . . 'Food and water supply a great problem.' Splendid! Hullo! Here's some sort of a sketch of his trenches and dug-outs. What's this? *ICE!*" The word seemed to leap out at him from the written page.

"Look here, Anderson! Fritz has got the ice maggot in *his* brain," he said to his servant. Then he read through the passage which contained the magic word.

". . . July 14th. These filthy English continue to drive us back. But this general misfortune brings some luck to me at least. Colonel H. has allowed me to fall back to the outskirts of Guillemont and to share with him his commodious dug-out. There is a big labyrinth of dug-outs here, forming an underground hospital with which Colonel H.'s quarters communicate. But, best of all, the hospital has an ice machine, and so we get all the iced drinks we want, an inestimable boon this scorching weather. . . ."

"All the iced drinks we want," murmured Jim. "The luxurious dogs! And I don't suppose the staff of the British Army has an iced drink between here and Calais. Well, what do you think of it, eh, Anderson?"

"Well, sir, I always did hear as them Hun orficers had plenty of comforts. Don't you remember all them beer bottles we saw in their trenches at Fricourt?"

Lieutenant Jim lit his pipe, crawled into a comfortable position from which he could see Guillemont, and started to study Captain Koch's sketch. It was a valuable find. Once in the hands of our artillery, and the gunners would be able to concentrate their fire on the main German trenches and the exits to the subterranean labyrinth. Colonel H.'s dug-out was clearly marked. It opened out into what appeared to be the enemy's front-line trench near the station. From where he lay Jim could locate the station accurately by the twisted rails, destroyed trucks, sidings, and other railway *débris*. It was not more than eight hundred yards away. Judging from the plan, the Colonel's dug-out lay to the right. He called to Anderson to get him his compass out of his haversack. Shading the glass from the sun, in case a reflection from it should attract some Hun sniper, he took a careful bearing. Then he climbed down, murmuring to himself: "All the iced drinks they want."

He wrote a note to his Machine Gun Company Commander, inclosing the diary, and dispatched Anderson with it to Brigade Headquarters. He hoped the find would bring the company some *kudos*.

A machine-gun officer has considerable freedom of movement in the trenches. His guns are spread over the brigade front. They form isolated posts, to visit and maintain which it is his duty to pass from one to the other as often as he thinks necessary. Jim was hot and weary. The afternoon's "strafe" had developed some intensity. He was satisfied about the security of his gun teams so long as they remained under cover. He sat and smoked, and thought of Colonel H. In imagination he saw the Colonel helping himself at that very moment

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

to a large lump of ice, which dropped clinking into a tumbler by his side. He enlarged the picture. He saw the ice machine itself turning out blocks of crystal coolness. He thought of his club in Shanghai where ice was a common necessity of daily life. He thought of the Brigadier thirsting for just one cold drink. And his thoughts returned with rage to the fat Boche Colonel only eight hundred yards away with all the ice he wanted.

Anderson returned with the message that the Captain was out.

"That means that the artillery won't get the sketch map to-night," said Jim.

"And the Quartermaster-Sergeant," continued Anderson, "says he can't send up any more water before dawn."

"Great Scott!" gasped Jim. "That's absolutely the limit!" An angry light leapt into his blue eyes, his lips shut in a determined line, and a sudden resolve shaped itself in his mind. He turned to Anderson.

"Are you game for a stunt to-night, Anderson? You need not come unless you like. It's a private enterprise."

"Oh, I'm game, sir," replied Anderson without hesitation. Six months' service with Jim had given him complete confidence in his master.

"Then if we have any luck," said Jim, "we'll both get an iced drink to-night. The boldest plan is often the shortest cut. I've got the bearing of that ice machine. As soon as it's decently dark we'll make a bee-line across country for it and trust to luck. Our artillery won't start 'strafing' the place to-night, and Fritz is unlikely to begin counter attacking for twenty-four hours, after the doing we've given him lately."

"*ICE!*" The word seemed to leap out at him from the written page. "Look here, Anderson! Fritz has got the ice maggot in *his* brain," he said to his servant.

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

That evening, had the gloom of dusk not been so deep, our soldiers would have been surprised to see two men climb the parapet and make straight for the German lines, the leading figure striding over the shell holes with the speed and confidence of knowledge and utter determination. All was still quiet in No-Man's Land. It was not dark enough for the nightly machine-gun fire to have commenced to sweep the ground. But it was dark enough to let them walk unperceived to within fifty yards of Guillemont Station. At a sign from Jim Anderson dropped down into a shell hole. Jim remained standing, peering into the gloom for some thirty seconds longer. Then he joined Anderson on the ground. He pulled two round German caps out of his pocket and handed one to his servant.

"Put it on and leave your tin helmet here," he whispered. "I've seen the slight glow from the Colonel's dug-out entrance. There's one sentry over it. I am going to trust absolutely to my luck, which has never failed me yet. We are going to walk straight past that sentry into the dug-out as if we owned the place. Don't say a word whatever you do; simply follow me like an orderly."

They crawled the last fifty yards and dropped into a trench ten yards from the sentry, a splutter of rifle fire drowning the slight noise of their progress. Squaring his shoulders, Jim marched straight for the sentry, who challenged promptly.

"*Ja wohl*," muttered Jim somewhat indistinctly, trusting to his round cap as a disguise in the gloom and continuing to walk straight into the indistinct form of the sentry. The sentry stood aside with the obsequious alacrity of the Hun soldier in the presence of his officer. Without hesitation, Jim and Anderson plunged down the steps, which were just visible in the faint glow from within the dug-out.

Colonel H. will all his life think of his capture that evening in the nature of a dream. He was in the act of dropping a piece of ice into his champagne (he had dined alone since Captain Koch's death) when he found himself looking down the barrel of an English officer's revolver. A hand gripped his sparkling glass, and the look of gloating triumph in Jim's eyes filled his soul with terror. His hands flew upwards in abject surrender.

Fixing the Colonel with his eye, Jim drained the tumbler. A sigh of profound enjoyment escaped him as he felt the delicious coolness of the wine coursing through him. He motioned to the Colonel to refill the glass, which he did with alacrity, not forgetting to drop a lump of ice into it from the pail by his side. Jim handed it behind him to Anderson, who from force of habit in a Colonel's presence was standing stiffly to attention. With a "Begging your pardon, sir," to the Colonel, Anderson drained his glass with no more expression than if he had been drinking his morning tea.

"You are my prisoner, sir," said Lieutenant Jim curtly. "You will precede me up the steps and turn to the right along the trench, remembering that my revolver goes off in the small of your back if you make the slightest noise or sign to your sentry."

The Colonel bowed, and asked permission to put on his cap.

Meanwhile Anderson, with marvellous dexterity, had concealed about his person half-a-dozen bottles of champagne. He then seized the ice-pail on the table and wrapped it in the Colonel's napkin. Another ice pail stood on the side table. He whipped the tablecloth off and proceeded to wrap it round.

"One pail is all we want," said Jim. "They will both melt before morning."

"Yes, sir," said Anderson. "One's for us and one's for the Brigadier."

Jim grinned with sudden appreciation. The procession then proceeded up the stairs, and in stony silence passed the sentry, who saluted the grim figure of his Colonel with more precision than the darkness rendered necessary. The Colonel, in his nervousness, was glad of even the slight support which the particular form of sudden death poking into his back afforded him. Unmolested, they hoisted him over the parapet and regained their helmets from the shell hole. Intermittent rifle and machine-gun fire had broken out by this time, but Lieutenant Jim, the luminous dial of his compass glowing in the hollow of his hand, pushed straight forward, regaining his own lines unscathed. Half-an-hour afterwards the strange procession halted outside the Brigadier's dug-out.

"The scene that followed," said the Brigade-Major afterwards to one of the battalion colonels, "was the most delightfully humorous thing I've seen since I joined the brigade. Without as much as 'By your leave,' Jim stumbled down into the dug-out, dragging the most pathetic-looking figure of a Boche Colonel you ever saw in your life. Both of them were sweating like navvies. But the contrast between their two expressions was too funny. The Hun had a look of abject misery. Jim looked as if he had supped in paradise. The Brigadier, whose temper had been worn to a shred by the heat, glared speechlessly at the couple.

"'I've brought you a German Colonel,

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Jim turned and beckoned his orderly forward. The man placed a pail on the table. . . . It was full of ice, with a bottle of fizz sticking jauntily out of the middle of it.

sir,' began Jim cheerfully. 'He was living opposite. . . . '

"'What the devil do you mean by bringing German Colonels to me unannounced, young man?' roared the Brigadier.

"And," said the Major, "I thought what an ass Jim was to risk losing all *kudos* to his stunt by barging in so unceremoniously. But, with the supreme confidence of the utterly successful man, Jim turned and beckoned his orderly forward. The man placed a pail on the table. I could hardly believe my eyes. It was full of ice, with a bottle of fizz sticking jauntily out of the middle of it.

Jim took our two glasses, opened the fizz and poured it out.

"The Brigadier's face was a study, I can assure you. It rose like a barometer from stormy to set fair in about two shakes. Jim handed him his glass and pushed mine across to me over the table. Neither I nor the Brigadier will ever forget that drink, nor the following ones either, while the ice lasted. The Brigadier became a perfect lamb. Jim handed over his prisoner on the most amicable terms, and before he decamped had a chat with the General about the enemy's defences.

"Yes," said the Colonel laughing, "several of my subalterns told me that they had had a round of iced drinks out of Jim afterwards. He paraded the whole front line trench with an ice bucket."

Lieutenant Jim got the Military Cross and Anderson the D.C.M. The *Gazette* said for "bravery and resource in entering the enemy's lines, capturing an officer of high rank, and obtaining valuable information." But Jim wrote and told his own people that it was for being lucky enough to get his Brigadier a cold drink on an exceptionally hot summer's night.

Of course, they did not believe him.

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

PICTURE PARAGRAPHS

The Editor will be Pleased to Purchase Photographs of an Interesting and Out-of-the-Way Nature. All Photographs should be Accompanied by a Short Description.

Photo *A. W. Cutler.*

A street scene in Oebreczen, in the Lowlands of Hungary. The loaf the woman is carrying on her back is, in normal times, the ordinary size in these parts, where bread is the staple food of the poor.

"EAT LESS BREAD!"

In these days, when from all quarters comes the command "Eat Less Bread," one hesitates to think of the dire fate likely to befall the person with sufficient temerity to appear in the street with such a colossal loaf as this in his possession. At the very least he would soon find himself denounced by the raging populace as a food-hog of the deepest dye!

Even in the piping times of peace, when to eat four slices of bread-and-butter with one's afternoon tea was not accounted a crime, it would have been impossible to drop in at the baker's on the way home from the office and purchase a loaf of bread this size.

In the Alföld, or Lowlands of Hungary, however, these monster loaves of bread in normal times excite no comment, for in these parts bread is the staple article of food among the poor.

"SOME" SEARCHLIGHT!

During the last few years the appearance of the searchlights—in London at any rate—has become an accepted fact. In spite of this being so, and that on several exciting occasions they have given an "all-night show," these beams of dazzling light still exercise a great fascination over the mind of the man in the street, who watches in rapt admiration as they energetically sweep the skies.

The land of the Stars and Stripes has the proud distinction of owning a searchlight which is six feet in diameter—the largest of its kind to be found the wide world over.

Photo *Photopress*

America owns this searchlight, which is the largest in the world, and is six feet in diameter.

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

SUGAR-CANE FOR FIVE.

A STICK of sugar-cane is one of the most acceptable gifts it is possible to bestow on a youthful native of Egypt, and these five youngsters are obviously enjoying the sweets of life to the full.

Sorry indeed would be the lot of an Egyptian child suddenly dumped down in England. Sugar-cane was ever lacking, and now, alas! so is sugar. Imagine the bitterness of young Egypt after waiting in a "sugar queue" for his favourite sweet only to find that the man in possession of what is now precious as diamonds had adopted as a motto: "No children served!"

Photo *A. W. Cutler.*

Egyptian boys chewing a long stick of sugar-cane. This is the most popular sweetmeat in Egypt amongst young and old alike.

A BATTLE-SCARRED RELIC.

THIS cigarette-case has been very thoroughly under fire, for while carrying it in his left breast pocket its owner, a corporal in a Yorkshire regiment, came under machine gun fire, with the result that a bullet passed through that part of the case marked "A," at the same time taking a button off the corporal's tunic; the end of another bullet is to be seen at "B," whilst a third just stopped at "C."

Photo *A. Tyreman.*

This cigarette-case has been very much in the wars, having stopped three bullets at the points marked A, B, and C respectively.

THE CROSSING OF THE WAYS.

THE crossing of road and rail, road and canal, or rail and canal, is a commonplace enough occurrence in engineering, but it is not often that these three "ways," rail, road, and water, have to cross at the same point.

An interesting example of this, however, may be seen not far from Hanwell, near London, and the difficulty is enhanced because the canal has to be carried over the railway. The road crosses on top, while underneath flows the canal in a water-tight box girder construction, and below again is the railway.

Photo *W. J. Line.*

A curious triple crossing, rail, road, and water, to be seen near Hanwell. The roadway crosses on top, the canal underneath in a water-tight construction, while under all runs the railway.

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

PROPER TO HER RANK

By F. E. Baily.

Mr. Gumblay, invalided out of the Army and possessed of boundless leisure, welcomes any diversion which will serve to speed the lagging hours. The discovery of Brenda Stevenson was a godsend to him, for she, desiring to mingle temporarily with dukes and peers, he was able to engineer the miracle, to give her a fleeting fortnight among Society's elect, and finally to share the secret which had led to her desire.

I.

Mr. Cyprian Gumblay (invalided) strolled resignedly along the afternoon menagerie of Oxford Street, perfectly dressed and perfectly bored. A faint drizzle spotted the expanse of his perfectly cut waterproof; a look of longing for the comfort of his Half Moon Street rooms began to steal over his pale, rather worn face. The soft air of early spring had tempted him to explore a hitherto unknown neighbourhood. Now he almost regretted the adventure.

Insensibly he paused at the sudden advent of rain and considered the situation. At his left hand stood an enormous, highly-decorated structure, gallant with gold leaf, wherein the Messrs. Tigers provided the elect with tea in luxurious surroundings at not unheard of prices. Already a stream of shoppers had begun to embrace the offer of shelter and sustenance combined.

Mr. Gumblay sighed pensively.

"The proper study of mankind is said to be man," he told his soul. "Now man obviously includes woman. There is a deuce of a lot of women going into this band-waggon-like edifice. I might as well follow them, and get some tea and keep dry."

Evidently the place enjoyed remarkable popularity, so much so that Mr. Gumblay could not discover a vacant table. His eyes roved patiently over the vast ornate saloon seeking a tolerable table companion.

Finally they lit upon a solitary figure, which, neglecting all the confectioner's triumphs that littered a silver dish beside her—it was before the days of limited teas and doled out sugar—sat with chin on hands gazing fixedly at nothing. She was a slender girl in grey that toned rapturously with her grey eyes, pretty in the indefinite, appealing fashion of a magazine cover damsel, who drew her inspiration from picture-postcard actresses, yet preserved a latent intelligence that made her altogether fascinating.

Pleasantly conscious of undeserved good fortune, Mr. Gumblay seated himself at her table.

An attendant in the smart *tenue* of the establishment writhed sinuously across, and took pencilled note of his requirements. Soon she reappeared with the paraphernalia of tea. With solemn care Mr. Gumblay filled his lonely cup, selected a piece of tea-cake thoughtfully, and proceeded to feed himself. The grey girl had roused in him a faint interest, but one cannot address strange grey girls, however rapturous, in a public tea-establishment. Yet the wonderful wireless of mutual attraction had flung out already its ethereal call. On the top of his well-brushed head Mr. Gumblay felt the deliberate, veiled scrutiny of the appealing stranger.

Then upon his ears fell her first words in the slow, purring drawl of the modern young female.

"Excuse me, but would you mind passing the sugar?"

Mr. Gumblay passed it, smiling his faint, attractive smile.

"Forgive me! I'm afraid my wits were wool-gathering. I ought to have noticed. How many lumps?"

"Two, please," said the grey girl, watching him with quiet reflectiveness. "Thank you."

The episode seemed at an end. Like snow upon the desert's dusky face, lighting a little hour or two, it had gone.

Mr. Gumblay sighed faintly.

"It is a depressing afternoon," he ventured at last. "I wonder if we might talk a little? Troubles shared are said to be halved. Let's halve yours, and let mine stay where they are, if you will allow us to, that is."

"You find the afternoon depressing?" commented the grey girl, refusing, girl-like, to commit herself openly. "I wonder why? You are young, evidently prosperous, very much your own master. What more do you want?"

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

"I wish I knew. What do you want?" said Mr. Gumblay politely.

The grey eyes grew dreamy.

"That brings us to the one great question: 'Should a woman tell?' I want all the things I shall never have. I wish I could have them now. I've got a fortnight's holiday, and I'm just making believe I can do as I like."

"Frocks, men, theatres, chocolates, motors," enumerated Mr. Gumblay. "No doubt you'll get them all. If you don't it's your own fault, I expect. Am I not right, charming stranger?"

"Not altogether. I want to change my spots, like a leopard can't. My own class isn't in the least interesting. I want to be a lidy and talk with dukes, and be seen at the best places, wherever they are, and have my picture in the *Prattler*. Isn't it silly?"

Mr. Gumblay almost took a piece of Russian cake, shuddered, and refrained.

"Nothing is silly that one likes. This is simple, if you really want it. I will tell you how it can be done if you wish. I should be honoured to show you such of the world as you choose. It will take up part of your mornings and afternoons and evenings. Does the idea appeal to you?"

"Are you serious?"

"Certainly!"

The grey girl smiled, a miraculous, inscrutable smile, full of unutterable things.

"I never believed in romance till now. Henceforward my gods shall be the Baroness Orczy and Mr. Le Queux. I don't know how to thank you, Mr.—um—and if you really do as you say, you will have achieved a most wonderful thing, which I'll explain to you some day. My name is Brenda Stevenson. I share a flat in the Fulham Road with another girl."

"I am Cyprian Gumblay, and I bore myself to death in Half Moon Street."

Miss Brenda Stevenson laughed.

"The extremes *have* met, haven't they? Perhaps you will call for me at eleven to-morrow, and take me for a walk in the Park to talk things over. And I'll pay for my own tea, please."

Mr. Gumblay nodded cryptically.

"It has been so nice; it will be so much nicer," he announced.

Outside she gave him a little slender grey hand for one instant.

"I shall feel such a fool to-morrow. Don't let me, will you?" she implored, and then the crowd engulfed her.

As Mr. Gumblay sat that night in his smoking-room his eyes lit on certain shell-cases that adorned the mantelpiece. Converted by jewellers into works of art, they formed pleasing wedding presents.

"She's quite nice. There are Haileybury and young Rottingdean. Stranger things have happened; why not?" he murmured.

There entered Lucas, the impeccable servant.

"Shall you require anything more to-night, sir? If I might suggest a glass of hot milk, Mr. Cyprian, sir. Bred up in the family as I've been, sir, your indifferent health is a source of great anxiety, if I may say so with respect, sir. You still look very sadly, Mr. Cyprian."

Mr. Gumblay waved an effacing hand.

"Nothing, thank you, Lucas. Be of good cheer, for I have found the magic tonic of romantic adventure. Already I am as a giant refreshed!"

II.

Punctually at eleven a.m. Mr. Gumblay's grey Vauxhall drew up outside 3006 Fulham Road. He alighted from the vehicle, and inspected somewhat doubtfully a door beside a baker's shop bearing the magic number 3006. Mr. Gumblay proceeded to press an electric bell-push, but, alas! no cheerful trill resulted within the house of mystery. Presently he observed that the door stood ajar, and proceeded to explore. A flight of stairs faced him, bleak, uncarpeted stairs, that led up to a landing upon which three doors gave. The stairs meandered upward still, but Mr. Gumblay halted.

"Evidently a house turned into flats," he murmured. No name appeared on any of the doors. Seeking a sign from heaven, he perceived a stuffed black cat hanging over the most remote door. Smiling a little, he knocked.

"Come in," called a voice, the voice of Miss Brenda Stevenson.

Mr. Gumblay entered a large, pleasant room, with two big windows overlooking the street. It contained very little furniture—a dresser, a big divan, a chair or two, a writing-table, and a bookcase. These served simply to emphasise the spaciousness of the room. Through a connecting door he had a glimpse of a bedroom beyond. The whole place struck a note of rest and charm.

Brenda sat on the arm of a chair, a magazine dangling in her hand. She wore the same grey frock of the day before, with a bunch of violets at her breast. Her gloves lay on the divan where she had thrown them. Mr. Gumblay felt almost abashed for some absurd reason. He seemed to himself a mild intruder in a girl's chosen solitude.

Brenda slid from the arm of the chair.

"Good morning," she said in her little, drawling, non-committal voice. "So you've stuck to your mad bargain? Somehow I wondered if you would."

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

"That," declared Mr. Gumblay, "was unkind. I love your flat, if I may be allowed to say so. Would you care to run down to the Park in my car, or would you rather do something else?"

"The car by all means, thank you." She picked up the gloves, and began to put them on. "A car, you remember, was one of the things you decided I long for."

A few minutes later she settled herself beside Mr. Gumblay, and they slid away in the late winter sunshine, a not unlovely couple. Brenda said very little, and Mr. Gumblay, wise with knowledge beyond money and beyond price, let her dream. He knew the luxury of the big car and his unworthy self were sinking into the innermost tissue of her girl's soul.

They turned in at the gate of Hyde Park Corner, and he drove her slowly round the Park once. Then he drew up gently by the railings at one end of the Ladies' Mile, and glanced down at her thoughtfully.

"If you are agreeable you shall meet your duke at luncheon to-day," he said casually.

With a magnificent effort Brenda prevented herself from starting.

"Where shall we meet His Highness?"

"We shall meet him in a restaurant."

"How do you know he will be there?"

"Because," said Mr. Gumblay contemptuously, "Haileybury would never have sufficient imagination to do anything else but lunch at Robinson's. Robinson's is part of the British Constitution, and so is Haileybury. You will see him eat a grilled chop and drink a pint of Chablis. His ancestors ate chops and drank pints of Chablis during the battle of Trafalgar, and Robinson's ancestors grilled the chops and poured out the Chablis."

"Very well," agreed Brenda. "By all means let us go to Robinson's and watch the Duke eat his mutton. It will be the nearest I've ever got to a duke so far."

Mr. Gumblay glanced down absently at her fair, wavy locks, upon which rested an alluring black hat.

"By the way, do you do anything useful? I mean, can you type, or write shorthand, or drive a car, or jaw people about cookery and hygiene?"

"I can type and write shorthand, and run a business office. Why?"

"'Drive on the cart,'" quoted Mr. Gumblay, depressing the self-starter. "Now I have a peg to hang you upon. You see, Haileybury is engaged on war work. He is a mad mathematician, and runs the Department of Combatant and Semi-Combatant Statistics. You are going to help him, so am I. It will amuse you for a fortnight, and that's all we want. The Duke has his head in the clouds all the time, but Lord Percy Rottingdean is quite amusing. I forget whether he's in the Combatant or Semi-Combatant branch. He's the Earl of Brighton's son, you know—if not a duke, the next best thing."

"Undoubtedly," observed Brenda. Her little *exigeant* mouth had straightened the merest shade. One might have gathered that she was making up her mind not to flinch before this galaxy of the peerage.

"Rottingdean will be at luncheon as well," pursued Mr. Gumblay, threading his skilful way towards Robinson's. "He hates the place, but Haileybury makes him go, and then talks about logarithms all the time. I consider Rottingdean is doing his bit."

In the remote and pompous mausoleum which is Robinson's, Brenda and Mr. Gumblay struck an altogether frivolous note. Mr. Gumblay strolled lightheartedly where he chose, and selected a table next to that occupied immemorially by the Duke of Haileybury. Waiters whose forbears had been chamberlains and seneschals to William the Conqueror directed the pageant of the food.

Brenda, looking up from her soup, beheld a slim "knuttish" figure in khaki Service dress stalk up and seat himself at the immemorial table, followed by a tall, fair man of thirty, clad in morning dress vaguely reminiscent of the hungry forties. Mr. Gumblay flickered his eyebrows imperceptibly to indicate the Duke of Haileybury and Lord Percy Rottingdean.

"You come to a gay place to lunch, Percy," he observed quizzically to the khaki-clad one.

"Oh, putrid! The Duke will insist. He's my boss, and there you are," grumbled his lordship, casting a connoisseur's eye on Brenda.

"Miss Stevenson, this is Lord Rottingdean," pursued Mr. Gumblay amiably. "He rests from his conquests, exhausted with slaughter, at the interesting little department I described to you, where you and I are going to do work of national importance. Good-morning, Haileybury. I bring you two new recruits — Miss Stevenson and myself. Find employment for our willing hands, we beg of you."

"I am sure," let fall the Duke, with the massive courtesy of his race, "Miss Stevenson will be an acquisition, but of you, Gumblay, I am not equally certain."

He darted fierce looks into far corners of the room, a habit born of futile addresses for sympathisers at public meetings, no doubt.

"Henry, bring me a chop . . . and a pint of

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Brenda, looking up from her soup, beheld a slim, "knuttish" figure in khaki Service dress stalk up . . . followed by a tall, fair man of thirty, clad in morning dress vaguely reminiscent of the hungry forties.

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Chablis," he continued. "Percy, what shall we do with our friend Gumblay here?"

"I should prefer Miss Stevenson to superintend all my girls—like a lot of magpies," complained his Lordship. "I should think Gumblay could tackle those inward and outward statements. They make me giddy."

"Poor Lord Rottingdean!" sighed Brenda, with a little, understanding smile.

Mr. Gumblay glanced at her in admiration. The sympathy in her voice was calculated to a nicety. She had taken exactly the measure of Lord Rottingdean. From that moment the two became deep in conversation.

Half-an-hour later the Duke broke off in an interesting discussion with Mr. Gumblay on a point of national interest and prepared to return to his Department.

"Then we may turn up to-morrow and you will give us work?" queried Mr. Gumblay finally.

"Most certainly," agreed the Duke. "Now, if you are ready, Percy, my dear fellow——"

He stalked gauntly down the vaulted apartment, followed by the reluctant Lord Percy.

That afternoon Mr. Gumblay spent in the pleasant pursuit of shopping with Brenda. She laid out quite a little sum of money, and in every instance begged him to help choose. They partook of tea at a gay and fashionable restaurant, enjoying themselves immensely. It was half-past six by the time they returned to Fulham Road.

"I will call for you in the car at 9.30 to-morrow," promised Mr. Gumblay. "We mustn't be late at our first day's work. Good-night, pretty lady."

III.

Mr. Gumblay, in his corner of an immense room in the Department of Combatant and Semi-Combatant Statistics, metallic with the click of typewriters innumerable, dictated to the Hon. Trefolia Simpson-Smith, his amanuensis:

"With reference to your letter of the 20th inst., it is regretted that no action can be taken by this Department. It is pointed out that the subject adverted to is not a matter within our knowledge or concern."

The Hon. Trefolia, a bright girl of twenty-two, stifled a yawn prettily and gathered up pencil and notebook.

"Remember that there is only one 'p' in 'department,'" counselled Mr. Gumblay. Then he glanced about him thoughtfully.

The whole place constituted a hive of industry. The latest business methods brought their wonderful results on every hand. The female staff, graded, rearranged, co-ordinated, had doubled in efficiency. All this had occurred in rather more than a week at the hands of Brenda. She seemed to have laid herself out to open the eyes of Lord Percy Rotingdean, with transparent success. Mr. Gumblay, doomed to his uncongenial struggle with the inward and outward statements, saw, admired, and understood. It was Brenda's pleasure to show a real live lord what could be done.

Remote from him, he beheld her engaged in earnest conversation with Lord Percy, who gazed at her in respectful admiration. The young nobleman no longer lunched at Robinson's with Haileybury. Instead, for the last week he had taken Brenda regularly to the Imperium in order to discuss important matters affecting the Department. There Brenda had planned and carried out her Napoleonic policy.

Mr. Gumblay reflected on all these things while he considered the worshipful expression on the far-off face of Lord Percy. It typified the mental experience of a man who, considering them a race of charming fools, has been brought up against efficiency in woman for the first time. His Lordship obviously felt Brenda to be very wonderful and desirable.

Suddenly she turned about and crossed the big room to Mr. Gumblay's side. In her face he read a great decision.

"I'm dining out to-night with Lord Rottingdean," she said swiftly, "so I shan't be going home in your car, thanks. I promised to go in his. And will you be able to spare me an hour to-morrow morning? I think I shall want to talk to you. Do you mind? I know I've been an awful nuisance, but it won't last much longer. The fortnight's nearly up."

"As you will, pretty lady. I am your dog, as usual," replied Mr. Gumblay with a lightness of heart he did not feel. He scented emotional crises, always exhausting and insufferably tiresome.

The next morning, when he reached 3006 Fulham Road, she was sitting in an armchair by the fire, a piece of sewing in her hands, without a hat on or any sign of departure. She looked up and smiled as Mr. Gumblay entered, and waved him to the divan.

"Sit down and talk," she began. "I'm not going back to that ridiculous place any more. I've got a lot to tell you, too. For one thing, I'm going to get married."

"I congratulate you," murmured Mr. Gumblay. "I won't attempt to guess who is the lucky man."

He watched her with interest as she sat sewing by the fire, an exceedingly charming figure, and rather envied Lord Percy.

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

"He isn't Lord Rottingdean," she went on, as if she had read Mr. Gumblay's thoughts. "I refused him yesterday evening. How stupid some men are! I'm quite unsuited to him, and he didn't seem able to realise it. The man I'm going to marry is a stranger to you. I've been engaged to him for two years. He keeps a shop down at home."

"So that was your *trousseau* you were buying the other day," commented Mr. Gumblay. "It was nice of you to let me help."

Brenda nodded.

"I s'pose every girl gets a sort of imprisoned feeling just before her wedding. That's why I made up my mind to have a fortnight's holiday all on my own. Consequently I left the people I used to work for up here earlier than I need have done—on the very day I met you, as a matter of fact. And then you seemed rather nice, and I determined to have one last fling of my very own—to see, if possible, just what I should miss by marrying the man I *am* marrying."

Stooping—for he was tall—he kissed the wet eyes and the little shaky mouth very tenderly. "Good-bye," he said, "and good luck!" [*Page* 376, *col.* 1.]

"Or just what you will gain?" suggested Mr. Gumblay gently.

She shrugged her shoulders.

"I shall settle down, and women hate settling down. But one can only be romantic as long as one's looks last, and in this life one thing has to be balanced by another. Don't you agree?"

"What sort of a man is your *fiancé*?" queried Mr. Gumblay.

"He's very fond of me and he'll be very good to me. He thinks a great deal of me. We shall be able to help one another. I dare say in ten years he'll have branches all over the provinces. But I shan't bring him to London. I couldn't walk down Piccadilly along by the Green Park with him in spring. You understand, don't you? One can't have everything."

"No," said Mr. Gumblay, "I s'pose not. Perhaps you could get more if you—but

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

there, a girl always knows best. She has a fatal instinct in these matters—

'Out of the sound of the ebb and flow,
Out of the sight of lamp and star,
It calls them where the good winds blow,
Where the unchanging meadows are;
From faded hopes and hopes a-gleam
It calls them, calls them night and day,
Beyond the dark into the dream
Over the hills and far away!'"

Brenda got up, and there were tears in her grey eyes.

"You've been an awful dear to me," she murmured. "Good-bye, and please don't come to my wedding. I want you to think of me here in this little flat, just as you will leave me now."

For a moment Mr. Gumblay held both her hands in a long, steady grip. Then stooping—for he was tall—he kissed the wet eyes and the little, shaky mouth very tenderly.

"Good-bye," he said, "and good luck!"

IV.

Less than a week later Mr. Gumblay with his own hands packed up a shell-case, cunningly converted into a claret jug by talented goldsmiths, to serve as a wedding-present for Brenda. Taking up a pen, he consulted a marked copy of the *Clayhampton Gazette* which printed an account of the wedding.

MRS. ALFRED WICKS,
4 Cornmarket,
Clayhampton,
Sussex,

he wrote, sighing.

For a moment Mr. Gumblay paused in replacing the pen. He was picturing 4 Cornmarket, Clayhampton, and its social amenities. Then, shuddering, he pressed the electric bell-push.

"Lucas," he commanded, "register this at once, please. It is already late."

"Better late than never, sir," suggested Lucas, who knew what the parcel contained.

"I am not so sure," replied Mr. Gumblay, but he was not thinking of the wedding-gift.

(Next month Mr. Gumblay journeys westward to the Cornish sea-coast, and spends delicious days in company with youth and beauty, incidentally settling the fate of the last shell-case to his entire satisfaction.)

WASTED OPPORTUNITIES.

Up in the front line trenches,
Miles from the nearest skirt,
With nothing but mud to look at,
And never a chance to flirt;
I see them in sweet procession—
Dim as a summer mist—
Girls whom I knew in Blighty,
Girls whom I might have kissed!

There was Margot, *petite* and graceful,
Wayward, provoking sprite!
With eyes like two purple pansies
And hair that was black as night;
Helen, the tall and stately,
Girdled in youthful dreams,
Joan, whom I met at Henley,
(Lord! what an age it seems.)

Others there were enchanting—
Nancy, who raved of art,
Gladys, who golfed superbly,
Gwen of the golden heart.
So the procession passes,
Conjuring dreams of bliss—
Girls whom I knew in Blighty,
Girls whom I hope to kiss.

Dorothy Rose.

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Mr. George Robey, in addition to his genius as an actor, is quite a clever artist, as this sketch of himself clearly shows.

"Filmities"

By George Robey.

"If you want to experience at first hand a series of thrills and laughs that show how thoroughly enjoyable life can be—go in for cinema acting," says Mr. George Robey. The famous comedian has himself been turning his attention to cinema work just recently, and in the following entertaining article he talks in his own inimitable manner of the many exciting and amusing experiences he has had while acting before the camera.

Take my advice, if you want to experience at first hand a series of thrills and laughs that show how thoroughly enjoyable life can be, go in for cinema acting!

I've been doing it lately. In England, film work does *not* mean falling from the garret window of a sixty-storey building, or standing for twelve hours in ice-cold water, or leaping from a seventy-mile-an-hour express in full working order, or leading the simple life in a genuine jungle, surrounded by breathing specimens of Kipling at his best!

They tell me these things are the A B C of cinema-work in the giddy U.S.A., but in this country, though our efforts do not carry us quite so far, I can assure you it is possible to crowd quite a lot of excitement and mirth into a day with the camera. I've done it; so I know.

Quite between ourselves, I hope to skip across the Atlantic one fine week-end and find out just what film-work over there is really like. And if it comes up to the reports circulated by imaginative press agents, don't expect to see me back again for—oh, quite as long as that; p'raps longer. I'll let you know when I'm going. No bouquets, please!

To me, film-work has always been fascinating—from a distance. Candidly, I never believed that I should be any use at it, and though, as an ardent photographic enthusiast, I followed the progress of cinematography through all its stages, I never pictured myself in a Picture, if you know what I mean. Somehow, it never occurred to me at all. But one night I was told that a gentleman wished to see me, and inspection of his card revealed the fact that he represented a cinema company. He came in, and proceeded to make me an offer to appear in some screen plays.

"Don't be absurd!" I retorted. "I've never done any film work, and I shouldn't be any good at it."

He was firm, however, and said: "My company thinks you *would;* we are prepared to test our belief. Will you take it on?"

The end of it was that I consented, feeling

When bearded in his dressing-room by the representative of a cinema company and begged to embark upon film work, Mr. Robey was not enthusiastic, but finally yielded, and has now played in several films, of which the latest is "Doing His Bit."

Digitized by Google

Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

On one exciting occasion, while disguised as a coy milkmaid, Mr. Robey was milking a cow, when the animal took fright and dashed up and down the studio, defying all efforts to capture her, and scattering actors and "properties" far and wide.

rather amused and certainly interested in this new departure.

Behold me, not long after, studio-bound at 8 a.m. one merry morning, my "make-up," wigs, clothes, and so on and so forth in a largish, not too obtrusively new, bag. I've had it for years, really. Somehow, anything to do with acting at such an early hour in the morning strikes most players as particularly odd. We can act with zest and zeal from 8 p.m. onwards, but 8 a.m., with the world not warm and the milk still on many doorsteps, seems just a little—yes, that's the word—unusual. Yet it must be done, and cinema players get quite accustomed to wild love scenes in the early morning—after the first few attempts in this direction.

Enter my bag and myself into the studio of the Ideal Film Company one morning for the purpose of taking a film entitled "Doing His Bit." I'm going to tell you about this film because it happened to contain a good many peculiar incidents. Though I am early, others are earlier still. The studio is one vast, wooden-floored room, dead level, divided into different "stages" by the arrangement of scenery and lights.

At the moment it is fairly dark. Half-way down the floor the producer is superintending the building up of the scene to be used first, while in the dressing-rooms players struggle into "make-up" and clothes. My own "make-up" seems strangely unwilling to spread itself over my face—sleepy, perhaps! As a matter of fact, when this film was made it was so cold that one morning I had to *melt* my grease-paint at a stove before I could use it. That'll show you what film-work means!

However, in due course my face becomes a yellow expanse, with two dark eyebrows; above it I plant one of my own wigs, and over that a gorgeous red woman's wig, as I am playing a woman most of the time. A large hat-pin secures my hat, and then the fun begins.

Out on the "floor"—for it is not a stage—the producer is already rehearsing some characters for the scene to be done first. Men are swinging along big lamps, hung on iron girders from the ceiling, and grouping them round the temporary scene, which represents a cow-shed. I, myself, in sun-hat and print frock, am a milkmaid, if you please! Before leaving the previous day it had been arranged that this scene should start proceedings, so we knew what to expect.

The operator is busy behind his camera; the producer and his assistant, holding large bundles of type-written "script," get busy on

Digitized by Google Original from NEW·YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Scene 96. Oh, yes, there are nearly 200 scenes in the film before we get through with it; and in taking it, we often jump from Scene 161 back to Scene 24, and then off again to 92—or thereabouts.

In this scene there is a cow—Nelly, let us call her. It's a gentle name, and Nelly looks a gentle cow. Having arranged the business for the scene without the cow, that animal is led to the *locale* of the fray and instructed carefully in her duties. These consist of standing still, while I, as a milkmaid, milk her! Now Nelly, during the rehearsing of this scene, behaved like an angel.

"This is going to be great!" the producer declared, and I felt quite fond of Nelly.

Then the order to "take" went forth; the lights were switched on—*biff!*—but did the glare disconcert that cow? No! The camera whirred, the producer talked, I acted hard—and then the *contretemps* occurred. The player who had to interrupt my labours by making love to me took an unexpected step sideways, kicked over a large tin pail, and it bounced right into the back legs of Nelly with a fearful clatter.

That finished Nelly. With a muffled roar, a streak of brown cow charged madly past me, knocking me sideways, raced by the camera and the astounded operator, plunged past the producer, his assistant, and their table, and dashed frantically round the studio.

It was a memorable scene. Nelly, crazy without a doubt, raced up and down the wooden floor, tearing by the canteen, the dressing-rooms, the carpenter's shop, the "property-room," the scene dock—even attempting to mount a flight of "property" stairs! And at her heels an excited mob, led by myself and the farm hand who had kicked the bucket, and followed by everybody in the studio, including the cook!

Up and down we tore, backwards and forwards, panting, shouting, laughing. And Nelly defied us all! We tried to catch her in the rear. Useless! We tried cunning, strategy, blandishments, in vain. Nelly ran, and bucked, and looked the wildest thing in cows I've ever seen. It took us two hours to capture that cow—and then she was run to earth outside the studio, by a passing milkman, after she had whizzed through some half-closed doors in a frantic dash for freedom.

It was no good to try the scene again that day. Nelly was a wreck, and so were we! So she was re-engaged, at vast expense, for the following day; and when the scene was tried again, dear, gentle Nelly had a rope round her neck, tied to a ring in the scenery. No more cow-chases, thank you!

That particular afternoon was to be spent in filming a real, open-air "chase," in which the entire company, dressed as farm hands, had to chase me, and a real farmyard, not a hundred miles away, had been hired for this purpose. Breathless from our exertions with Nelly, lunch proved cheering; and not the least amusing sight of the day was a bunch of players in smocks and farm-clothes eating lunch at the studio canteen-table, for all the world like a genuine farmhouse meal.

Bundling into motor-cars, we soon arrived at the chosen farm, accompanied by a series of stares from passers-by.

There, surrounded by

During the filming of an "exterior" scene, the appearance of Mr. Robey clad in feminine attire, over which he wore his own great coat, and smoking a cigar, was the signal for much ribald mirth among the urchins of the neighbourhood.

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

haystacks and barns, the chase was arranged and rehearsed. We ran, and ran, and then ran some more—I, in my woman's dress, with my own man's wig, clutching my skirts, and revealing trousered legs—pursued by a frenzied mob waving shovels and pitchforks.

Having got the whole thing mapped out, we did it for the camera; and then I led myself into a nice adventure. In the excitement of the moment, towards the end of the chase, I rushed beyond the camera, and on, and on, scarcely thinking what I was doing, till I wheeled round a corner, and came slap up against a door.

Without hesitating I jerked it open, hurled myself inside the room, banged the door, and fell against it, panting. The next episode was a sudden scraping of chairs, shrill screams, excited feminine voices—and I opened my eyes, to find myself in a big room in the farmhouse, confronting a small crowd of terrified females, who had been peacefully having tea! I don't blame them for looking frightened; I must have been an awful apparition, with my yellow face, comic wig, woman's print dress—and trousered legs! Can you picture it?

I was gasping for breath, and could hardly speak. They went on screaming, and I heard them chattering among themselves, and caught the word "Lunatic!" Then I tried to explain. I gasped: "I'm a—I'm only a—let me tell you—I'm a——" But they didn't wait. With one rush they fled to the opposite door, bolted through it, and a key was turned on the other side. Almost at the same minute I heard a key turned behind me—and knew I was locked in! Jolly, wasn't it? I banged on the door, shook the window, and shouted, but it seemed years before the producer and his *entourage* rounded the corner, and nearly collapsed at the sight of my agonised face at the window.

Explanations and apologies followed, and I was duly released, but it was a queer experience while it lasted.

Returning to the studio, we did one more "exterior" scene in a street near by. With my own great coat over my female garb, and wearing my woman's wig and hat, I marched up the street, smoking a cigar, to keep myself warm. I suppose I *did* look a bit odd—small boys seemed to think so evidently. But the crowning point of the day arrived when the door of a house by which I was standing was flung open, and an old lady hurried out, calling to me:

"Oh, don't start for a minute, will you? I *must* call my daughter Sarah—I wouldn't let her miss this for anything. She's upstairs, washing; wait while I call her, please; it isn't often that we have these luxuries!"

In the same film I had to play some scenes with a baby, as a mother's help, and I was an excellent specimen of this genus, believe me. The baby was a real one, about eight months old, belonging to someone who worked at the studio. The point of the scenes rested on the fact that the baby didn't like the new mother's help, and cried. Looking at myself in the glass, I had no doubt that the infant would cry upon beholding me! Imagine my horror when the child—being brought down one morning in advance, to get used to the place—gave one look at me, and crumpled up with laughter!

It was no good—whatever I did that baby laughed. I looked at it; I talked to it; I nursed it—and still it laughed!

"Never mind—we'll risk it!" the producer decided. So, on the fatal day, the baby arrived in the morning, and so did I. Clad in my severe mother's help clothes, wig and all, I took my place in the nursery, and there was my charge, smiling and gurgling. The producer tore his hair, and so did I—mentally; and still that child smiled.

Then someone turned the lights on. In the glare, the baby looked at me, looked again—and a dismal howl rent the air.

"Take!" yelled the producer—and we plunged headlong into the scene. As long as it lasted that baby cried in the most splendid style, but no sooner did the camera stop and the lights go out than the tears vanished, and back came a glorious grin. Wasn't it an extraordinary coincidence? But we got the picture we wanted!

D'you think film-work is interesting? You're right—it *is!*

A WAR-TIME GARDEN.

There's laurel for the heroes, and greenly-growing bay,
And pansies for our thoughts of them the while they are away;
There's heliotrope for hoping they'll soon be coming back,
And roses waiting redly to strew their homeward track.
There's poppies for forgetting the message of the rue,
And rosemary for you, my dear—rosemary for you!

Anne Page.

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

THE HERMIT CRAB

By Jessie Pope.

"Wherever valour true is found,
True modesty will there abound."

The old wreck lying out a quarter-of-a-mile beyond the point fascinated Norah. More than once she had almost come up to the scratch of swimming out to it—almost, but not quite—because, though she knew she could tackle the distance, she shrank from doing it alone. Billy, her brother, would have given her a lead readily enough, but Billy was in France, and there was no one else she had come across in the sparsely-populated valley behind the cliff, keen or capable enough to stay the course. Besides, the residents were all too much engaged in their own war work or pulling other people's to pieces, to take any further interest in the dismantled brig which lay as fast now on the sunken rocks as when they trapped her, nearly a year ago.

Norah had come down to Starcombe to take a well-earned holiday from war work. That was why she declined to be drawn into the vortex of local schemes when autocratically invited to do so by the Hon. Mrs. Tadcaster, who not only bossed the district and minded everybody's business, but had become more important than ever since her nephew had been awarded a bar to his Military Cross for taking a batch of German prisoners and rescuing a comrade out of a shell-hole.

With Billy still "unmentioned," Norah guessed these things must go by luck, and the recital of Tadcaster heroism left her unmoved; in fact, when the proud aunt cut her dead a few days later, the good-looking girl visitor at Cliff Cottage heaved a sigh of relief.

"She thinks I'm a dud, Billy" (she wrote to her brother), "and so I am in some ways. That swim to the wreck hasn't come off yet, but it shall before I'm much older, and I ll write and tell you about it in my next letter."

And now she stood on the shingle in her swimming costume—her kit left behind in he cave she had appropriated as a dressing-room—her red-brown hair waving in the breeze, and her wide, hazel eyes fixed on the sturdy old wreck lying away there in the blue water. The sea was like a mill-pond, the tide was slack, the conditions were ideal; it was only that little inward shrinking that held her back.

"Oh, get a move on, Cold Feet!" she said suddenly. "One, two, three—go!" and next moment the slim, supple figure was splashing through the shallows, ankle-deep, knee-deep, waist-deep, and then down went the red-brown head and out flashed the white arms in a strong, easy side-stroke.

Now and then the swimmer looked round to take her bearings, but there was no hesitation in the straight course, and the rhythmic, steady stroke brought the wreck nearer and nearer, till the distance was covered, the weed-grown, barnacle-encrusted hulk loomed above her, and she paddled round to the seaward side where the battered deck listed so steeply to the water that she could reach the gunwale and lever herself up by the rail.

In this position, still half in the water, supported by her slim, white arms, her hair about her shoulders, her eyes wide with curiosity, she paused a moment and looked around her. Even in the hot, cheerful sunlight the battered deck, the tangle of frayed and rotting ropes, the broken masts, the rusty brasswork of the abandoned derelict looked forlorn and pitiful; there was a desolate, ominous note in the cry of the gulls and a heavy, mysterious silence hanging over the wreck which made her shiver. But the planks of the deck were warm to her feet, and there were many holes and corners to explore without going below; for Norah didn't altogether fancy those hatchways, and decided to limit her investigations above-board.

The crash that had sent the brig between the two submerged rocks had smashed in the bow, but left the after part apparently

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

strong and serviceable—"not a bad place for a picnic," she thought, as she prepared to make her return plunge, "but a bit on the dull side when you're on your ownsome. Still, I'm jolly glad I've done it, and I'll swank to Billy about it for all I'm worth when I—oo—oh!"

A sudden, heavy, unexpected splash in the water alongside brought a little, startled scream from the bold explorer. A black object emerged from the surface, rolled over, and vanished, followed by another and another.

"Porpoises!" gasped Norah. "Well, I'm not going in while they're about. Why, it's a regular shoal! I wonder if they're dangerous?"

Half-forgotten stories flashed across her startled imagination of men being attacked by porpoises and the flesh nibbled off their bones. Or was it mackerel? Anyhow, she had no intention of making a test case of it or of negotiating her return swim while there was a suspicion of a rolling black fin above the water, and she sat in the sun by the broken bulwark delaying the start, though the tide had turned and the cross current would soon be running strongly.

"Well, I suppose I'd better be getting on," she said, rising to her feet, "but I don't altogether fancy it."

"What's the hurry?" remarked a voice, so close at hand and so unexpected, that a violent start ran through her from top to toe. She turned and saw a man standing at the broken hatchway—a young man in weather-worn grey flannels, with dark hair, clear grey eyes, the twist of a little humorous smile on his lips, and a very tanned, boyish face that was good to look at.

Norah stood staring at him, dumbfounded, but not in the least alarmed.

"I thought I'd got it all to myself!" she exclaimed.

"So did I," he replied, "but I should advise you to wait until the porpoises have made up their minds what they are going to do."

"Do you know if they eat people?" said Norah. "I've a sort of idea they do sometimes."

"Quite likely," he returned, "if they have sufficient provocation."

"How long have you been here?" she asked.

"About a week."

"Good gracious! Is this your home, then?"

"Only temporarily."

"What do you do—fish?"

He nodded.

"Ever catch anything?"

"Sometimes—I've caught something this morning."

"What?"

"A mermaid."

Norah's liquid little giggle rang out. "Oh, no," she said; "*only temporarily*. But aren't you lonely?"

He shook his head. "Not a bit," he replied. "I'm not very keen on my fellow-creatures just now, and the sea is a great friend of mine."

"So it is of mine," she agreed. "Does anybody know you are here?"

"Only the chap who brings me my grub, and you."

"You're a sort of hermit, I suppose?" continued Norah.

"Yes," he said, "a hermit crab, who's quite satisfied with his shell and minding his own business."

"Then you must have been horrified to see me bearing down on you."

"I didn't see you till you were just pulling yourself up by the rail, and I was busy, and waited to put a few finishing touches to what I was doing before I came out to speak to you."

"In spite of not being keen on your fellow creatures?"

"I thought a hermit crab might pass the time of day with a mermaid."

"Oh, well," she said, "*I* won't give you away."

"Thanks," he replied, "I guessed you wouldn't."

"I'll go now," she said; "the tide's turned, and I hate swimming against it—it's such a fag."

"I know," he replied, "and you'll find the swim's longer going back than coming; I always do. Shall I come part of the way with you, in case the porpoises feel hungry?"

"Yes," said Norah, "I'd be glad of company; but aren't you afraid someone might see you and track you to your shell?"

"Of course there's a possibility," he said, "but I'm willing to take the risk on one condition."

"What's that?"

"That you look me up again to-morrow about this time, and I'll give you a cup of tea."

"Can you make tea?"

"I can, priceless stuff in a saucepan. Will you come? Is it a deal?"

Norah nodded, and, strange to say, on the way back she had forgotten all about the porpoises and was thinking of hermit crabs, and, as a matter of fact, went on thinking about hermit crabs for the rest of the day and dreamt of them at night as well.

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Norah stood staring at him, dumbfounded, but not in the least alarmed. "I thought I'd got it all to myself!" she exclaimed.

Yet, when next day she pulled herself up by the rail on the seaward side of the wreck, the deck was deserted, and there was no sign or sound of life, and once more she made a few moments' pause in that position, looking round timidly, the sense of pleasurable anticipation changing to disappointment. But as soon as her wet feet went pattering up the slanting deck she heard a cheery "Hullo!" from the main hatchway, and peered down into the dim interior.

"Come down and have a look at my shell," he said, "all the necessary home comforts, and the kettle just boiling."

Norah daintily negotiated the broken stairway, and with a nod at her host glanced round the cabin which had once been the captain's. The home comforts comprised a chair and a broken table, on which stood a mug and a glass and a bag of biscuits, while in the far corner was a queer shapeless object covered with a sheet.

"Is that the skeleton in your cupboard?" she asked.

He nodded. "I'll show it to you some day," he said. "Shall we have tea down here or on deck?"

Norah voted for a sun bath in the open air; the solitude of the place swept away formalities, and they seemed as if they had known each other all their lives. They talked on almost every subject under the sun, until when she started on the war: "Oh, cut that out," he said rather sourly; "I thought you came down here to get away from it."

"So I did," she admitted, "but it's not easy. I suppose you are trying to get away from it a bit, too?"

He looked half stealthily at her. "Yes," he said, "so let's say the subject is barred, and have a plunging competition instead, with the last biscuit for a prize."

The mermaid won it on her handicap, and then the hermit crab, who seemed to live in his swimming costume in warm weather, swam back with her.

"By the way," he said, "if ever you want to send me a message, the chap who looks after me lives in the cottage next door to you, and he'll see I get it. I've a private code S.O.S. signal which he understands. His name is Keene, he's a local gardener, and special constable, but he's a sound fellow all the same."

"Have you ever used your S.O.S.?"

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

"Not yet," he replied, "but you never know your luck."

Norah wrote to brother Bill a full account of her swim to the wreck and what she found there, and when she had repeated the swim five days in succession she got his reply:

"Your friend seems a good sort," finished Bill, "but why isn't he with us?"

That was a question which Norah meant to put herself when she reached the wreck that morning, but the weather had changed, there was a stiff breeze and a decided lop on the water, and by the time she scrambled aboard she had no breath to spare for questions. In the ordinary course of things she would never have attempted to swim, but for Norah those five days had completely altered the ordinary course of things, and though she hardly admitted it to herself, love was the driving force that sent her through the grey, broken water.

What the feelings of the hermit crab were it was hard to fathom; his manner was always half casual, half mocking, and nothing seemed to affect him seriously. But on this occasion he came not only to meet her, but piloted her all the way back. That return journey was "some" swim, and if Norah was almost done before the shore was reached she had a good excuse. But he swam close to her side, and for once dropping his half mocking tone, encouraged her with a new tone in his voice.

"Stick to it, little mermaid." "Go steady." "Plenty of time." "We're nearly there." And when she threw herself on the hard-won beach, exhausted with her efforts, he waited by her side.

"All right again now?" he said, as she sat up and pushed the wet hair out of her eyes. "Don't come out again till the wind drops. Promise me that."

She promised, and from her cave anxiously watched the progress of the black dot of his head on the grey waves on his return journey, and heaved a big sigh of relief to see him grip the rail and climb aboard.

The wind dropped the same afternoon, the lop on the surface smoothed down with every minute, and the sun, as if ashamed of its temporary aberration, shone as radiantly as ever.

Norah was not the only person who watched the swimmer's return to the wreck, and that very afternoon when, tired with her exertions, she was drowsing in the garden, voices coming across the hedge from the special constable's porch not only aroused her, but answered the question she had forgotten to put to the hermit crab in the morning.

It was the Hon. Mrs. Tadcaster's staccato voice that first broke in on her siesta, and made her sit up suddenly and listen for all she was worth to the fragments of conversation wafted across the hedge.

"—Tracked the skulker at last—saw him swim to the wreck this morning—I thought he was in the neighbourhood for all you tried to put me off the scent." Keene mumbled something unintelligible in reply. "Known him since he was a boy, indeed!" rapped out the irate lady. "So have I—but that's not going to stop me fetching him out. You're a pretty special, and no mistake; I'll have him off that wreck before he's an hour older. I'll make it my job now, and you must row me over there and come with me."

The special mumbled something in reply, of which "'e trusted me," and "conscientious objector" were the only words that reached the listener.

"Conscientious fiddlesticks," cried the lady, "he's a skulker and a shirker, but I'll make him face the music and let him know what I think of him. Come, get your boat and take me across."

"Couldn't see to steer you, mum, without my spectacles, and they're gone to the mender's."

"I can see to steer you," answered the lady. "This is *my* job now. You row me there and leave the rest to me."

Norah waited to hear no more. So Bill's question was answered! She knew now the mystery of the hermit crab, his reticence about himself, his hatred of martial topics—shirking his duty, saving his skin—while Bill and all the others were risking their lives every minute for him. What could they all think of her, for she knew, alas, that she had fallen in love with a coward.

Norah clenched her fists and beat the air with them as she sought the clearer atmosphere of the cliff, for the garden stifled her. She plucked the image of the traitor to his country out of her heart, and metaphorically trampled it underfoot. And yet, when a quarter-of-an-hour later she saw Keene shoving off his boat from the beach with the stout figure of Mrs. Tadcaster in the stern, a sudden revulsion of feeling seized her. He might deserve all he got, but not at the hands of *that* woman, and, though theoretically she hated him, yet all of a sudden she made up her mind to save him if she could from the mortification and punishment that were his just reward, and in less than five minutes she was in the cave struggling into her still wet swimming costume.

The reluctant "special" pulled with slow and half-hearted strokes across the little bay, and was far too short-sighted, while his passenger was too interested in scanning the

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

While the search party were still busy in the forecastle their boat was being propelled to the point by the hermit crab's muscular strokes. Norah sat in the stern, her face lined and set.

wreck, to notice the head of a swimmer cutting across from the point.

The hermit crab, oblivious of the brain storms he was occasioning, was that afternoon so absorbed at work over the unveiled "skeleton in his cupboard" that he heard nothing of the difficult and perilous boarding finally effected by the stout and stalwart patriot, by means of much pushing, supporting, and pulling on the part of her agitated escort. But he looked round quickly as the bare feet of the mermaid came pattering along the passage of his shell. "Hul-*lo!*" he exclaimed. Then he saw the hard, strained look on her face and added: "What's wrong?"

"Come at once," she said. "They're after you."

A scared, startled look came into his face.

"Where?" he said.

"They're here now—down the forecastle. Their boat is waiting—there's a chance to get away and take their boat before they come up. Come *now*, or it will be too late!"

The scared, helpless look on his face filled her with contempt—and yet pity. He followed without a word, and while the search party were still busy in the forecastle their boat was being propelled to the point by the hermit crab's muscular strokes. Norah sat in the stern, her face lined and set. Not a word would she say till the keel grated the shingle.

"Who is it?" said her companion, jerking his head in the direction of the wreck.

Then she faced him.

"Mrs. Tadcaster and Keene. I heard them talking in the garden, and I know now that you're a deserter, conscientious objector, and all that sort of thing. The Tadcaster woman was mad to get the honour and glory of taking you herself—and somehow I couldn't allow that. I'd begun to—to care for you—and though that's all over and I loathe you now, I felt I couldn't stand by and see you humiliated. Go now. You can catch the 5.30 and get right away from the place."

He stood looking at her silently.

"Is that what you think I ought to do?" he said.

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

She shrugged her shoulders. "It's what you *can* do," she replied.

"But what do you think I ought to do?"

Her hazel eyes met his grey ones. "I think you ought to face it," she said, "and fight for your country instead of letting other men fight for you."

"All right," said the hermit crab with a curious smile. "Get your things on quick—come back with me to the wreck and see me give myself up and take my gruel like a man."

A sudden light shone in Norah's eyes. "Do you mean that?" she said.

"Yes. Only hurry—or I may change my mind."

"Do you mean you are willing to fight?"

He nodded.

"For my sake?"

He nodded again.

"I'm glad," said the mermaid simply—then her chin puckered and she added: "Then you must take care of yourself for my sake, too."

He laughed in his old mocking way. "Oh, I'll do that, for my own, trust *me*," he remarked, and not another word was spoken till once more the boat reached the wreck. Then he said shortly:

"Go and hide behind that deckhouse and lie low till I come to you."

It appeared that the two prisoners had not yet discovered the loss of their boat. but neither had they discovered their victim, and Mrs. Tadcaster, baffled and angry, had just been hoisted up the main companion and set a large but unsteady foot on the slanting deck when she saw her prey coming towards her. The next minute Norah, to her absolute amazement, heard the stout lady cry out, saw her run towards the hermit crab, throw her plump arms round his neck, and plant kiss after kiss on his sunburnt cheek.

"Oh, my brave, *brave* boy!" she cried. "Why have you led your poor old auntie a dance like this?"

Her brave, brave boy's face over her shoulder wore a little twisted smile as he replied:

"I knew you'd make such a deuce of a fuss over me, Auntie, and I've got a conscientious objection to that sort of thing, as I told Keene."

"Of course I shall make a fuss over you," she retorted. "You're a hero, and you've got to go through it. Anyhow, my darling boy, you'll come back with me now, and have no more of these silly tricks. Just fancy, ten days within a mile of me, and never to come near me. It was too bad!"

"I wanted to finish a picture I'd begun on the wreck before I went out," he said, "otherwise I wouldn't have troubled the neighbourhood at all. All right, I'll come to heel to-night, Auntie, and sleep in my bed like a Christian, on condition you go back now and kill the fatted calf and all that sort of thing, and Keene can bring the boat along for me in an hour or two."

"Will you give me your word of honour you'll come?" she said uneasily, looking into his face.

"My word as a Tadcaster," he said with a laugh—"that's enough."

It was, and the proud and happy local patriot let the special constable row her back while her thoughts were busy reconstructing the menu for dinner.

After a parting wave of the hand, the hermit crab, so soon to be wrenched from his shell, walked across to the deckhouse and faced the mermaid.

"Why did you deceive me?" asked Norah, her hazel eyes full of reproach.

"I didn't," he said.

"You made a fool of me and let me think you were a coward."

"I am one," he replied. "I funked facing the fuss I knew she'd make."

"But you didn't funk facing twenty Germans and bagging the lot."

"They were in a bigger funk than I was," he replied. "I didn't want them, but they insisted on coming."

"Well, what about getting the wounded man out of the shell-hole under fire?"

"I fell in myself by accident, and the blighter gripped hold of me and wouldn't let go—that's how that happened. But, anyhow, suppose we drop these painful subjects and come and look at the picture instead?"

She followed him silently down the main hatch to the saloon. The skeleton was still unveiled. It was a large canvas and showed the broken side of the wreck, green water, flying spray, and, holding on to the rail with slim white arms, a red-haired mermaid, her wide hazel eyes gazing half timidly, half curiously along the slanting deck.

Norah gazed at it a minute, then she said bitterly:

"So you sort of snapped me each time I came on board. You've had me properly all through. I took the bait every time. And now I suppose at dinner to-night you'll give me away to your aunt and make great sport of me." Her lip quivered, the strain of the last few hours was beginning to tell, and she turned away half petulantly.

But he caught her by the shoulders and made her face him.

"I'm not likely to give you away to my aunt or anybody else, Norah," he said, "because I want to keep you myself."

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

THE AMPHIBIANS

By Francis V. Smith.

"Thus did England fight:
And shall not England smite
With Drake's strong stroke in
battles yet to be?"

I.

"Impossible!" said the Navigator, sagely shaking his head.

"Absolutely!" agreed a Second-Lieutenant.

"Forget it, Tony!" chorussed the rest.

They had been discussing Ludwigshafen, that unattainable Mecca of destroyer and submarine-commanders, abiding-place of many German warships, where a resolute man with a sufficiency of torpedoes might work havoc in an hour that all the dockyards of Germany could not repair in a year—if only he could get in. A dozen naval officers whose ships were in port for supplies had foregathered in the smoking-room of the naval club, and to the general Babel Tony Heron — submarine-commander — had just contributed a new and incredible theory.

"What's impossible?" said an Engineer, surveying the group from the doorway.

"Tony says he knows of a back-door to Ludwigshafen, an' he swears the Huns don't know it's there!" said the Navigator. "Tell him he's an ass, Harper."

"I dunno," said the Engineer, cocking an observant eye at Heron. "Our Tony's a bright youth, though not beautiful, an' occasionally he speaks the truth. Tell Uncle all about it, Tony."

"I'll tell you later," said Heron with a scathing glance at the circle round the fire. "At present it 'ud be casting pearls before —ouch!"

"Strafe him!" roared the Navigator, and Heron was overwhelmed by a frontal attack from superior forces.

"*Kamerad!*" he gasped as a twelve-stone Lieutenant-Commander sat on his chest. "All right, I surrender. Lemme get up and I'll tell you all about it.

"Well, there *is* a way in," he said, regaining his chair in a crumpled condition—"a corkscrew channel a full fathom deep at dead low water. Bunny Kershaw and I found it early in 1914, just before the war began, when we were putting in three weeks' leave mucking about the German coast in a ten-ton cutter. You all know the coast west of the Bremner River—a string of sandy islands with miles of shallows between them and the shore. Hameroog and Osteroog are the two islands nearest to the Bremner, with an inlet called the Grosser Balje cutting in between them. We were there in '13, too, an' *then* the place was exactly as it's shown on all the charts, but since then Fritz has built a *pukka* concrete breakwater which bungs up most of the Grosser Balje. Dunno why—we tried to find out, but a Hun torpedo-boat chivvied us away.

"The tide-water behind those islands must get away, an' since Fritz has stopped up most of the fairway between the islands, the water has obligingly scooped out a channel for itself inshore of the islands. *And*, my sceptical friends, that channel begins in the Wurster Balje, west of Osteroog, and ends in the Bremner River, thus short-circuiting all the mines and other devilments that defend Ludwigshafen. How about it?"

"Stuff!" said the Destroyer-Commander. "They'll have corked it up with mines long ago."

"I don't think they've spotted it yet," said Heron. "Or they wouldn't have——" And he delivered a long technical argument to prove his point.

"Hullo! Here's the gilt-edged Staff," said the Navigator, as the Admiral's Secretary appeared in the doorway.

"Heron, the Admiral wants to see you at once."

Heron disappeared with the gilded one amid a volley of chaff, to return fifteen minutes later, his eyes bright and his head held high.

"How's this for a coincidence?" he cried. "We're to sail—alone—as soon as we can get our hook out of the ground. And when

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

I come back you unbelieving beggars will admit I was right."

"The channel?" cried a dozen voices.

Heron nodded, his eyes sparkling with delight.

"A free hand, dear boys, and every card in it a trump! Ta-ta!"

He passed out through the swing-doors into the night and hurried down to the harbour.

II.

"Three fathoms, sir, an' the muddy sand again."

"Confound these currents!" muttered Heron, bending down into the shelter of the canvas dodger to examine the chart by the light of an electric torch. "We shall be ashore at this rate. Port fifteen!"

His Majesty's submarine "X 1," running on the surface within a mile of the German coast under cover of darkness and a thick fog, turned sharply to starboard, and moved more freely as she left the shallows.

"Where are we?" asked Bunny Kershaw—second-in-command—rising through the conning-tower hatch.

"Just off the western end of Osteroog," said Heron. "We nearly knocked it out of the water just now."

"Quarter less five," from the leadsman. "Clean sand an' small shells, sir."

"Good enough. Starboard a bit—south-half-east'll just do it. Now for it, Bunny—the Wurster Balje's just ahead, an' in ten minutes we shall know whether our channel's mined or not. Port a little—stop both!"

A faint jangle of bells came up from the bowels of the submarine, her engines stopped, she lost her way and drifted slowly in with the making tide. In the silence that followed every man on deck strained his ears, but the only sound was a low rustle of surf that came from the darkness ahead. It was impossible to see a yard in the foggy blackness of the night, but Heron, who knew those waters as he knew his own hand, felt his way in by lead and compass, and was never once at fault. Soon the water shoaled again, and the sound of the surf was now on either hand; the submarine was drifting through the inlet between the islands.

"Still!" hissed the Commander in a tense whisper, and every man held his breath. They heard a faint hissing of steam ahead, then the murmur of the tide round the bow of a ship at anchor. They drifted past her in dead silence, so close that they could hear the hum of the dynamo working in her engine-room, and the guttural voices of men talking on her deck. There was a dim glow of light from some carelessly-screened port, the low gurgle of the current under her stern, and then the submarine had drifted clear, and the danger was past.

"Phew!" said Heron, wiping his forehead. "We don't want anything closer than that! Must ha' been a destroyer by the length of her!"

They drifted on through the night, and when the German destroyer was a safe distance astern the engines were started again.

"Starboard!" said Heron after a mile of blind navigation, and the submarine swung round and felt her way eastward. There was no rest for helmsman or leadsman, for the soundings were innumerable and the steering-engine was never still, while Heron patiently quartered the invisible sea in search of his channel, but suddenly the submarine swung in the grip of a new, swift current, and Heron chuckled softly.

"That's the channel, Bunny," he whispered exultantly. "D'you feel the rip of the tide? And now, dear boy, what's it to be—mines, nets, or patrols? You pays your money an' takes your choice."

He rang down to the engine-room for half-speed ahead, and "X 1" commenced the trickiest bit of navigation between Shetland and Scilly.

Three hours later, after eighteen blind miles of patient groping in the fog and darkness, the eddies and cross-currents of the narrow waters gave place to the smoother surface of the open river. Heron took a final sounding, examined the sand-speckled tallow in the hollow butt of the lead, took a last look at the chart, then turned to Kershaw, his face white as chalk in the glow of his electric torch.

"We're through!" he said, and there was a note of triumph in his voice.

They had worked one miracle of navigation that night, and the dawn was too near for the attempting of anything more, so "X 1" dived to the bottom in eight fathoms, and there she lay till dark, while her crew waited for the chances that the night would bring. All through the day they listened to the busy shipping above them, knowing that at any moment the bottom of some deep-draught battleship might crumple their conning-tower like a kicked tomato-can and drown them like rats in a flooded hole; but they had nerves of tempered steel, and their greatest trouble was that they could not smoke.

"Time to begin!" said Heron when the clock told him that it must be dark overhead. "If the fog's still on we're done." The submarine lifted from the bottom and went ahead under the power of her electric

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

motors. Heron brought her to the surface, opened the hatch for a moment, and looked eagerly about him. It was quite dark, but the air was clear, and in all directions ships, great and small, showed their lights, red, green, and white, as in time of peace, careless of concealment in the fancied security of their mine-guarded haven.

"Well, I'm hanged!" said Heron, who had looked for no such luck as this.

"Cheek, I call it," he said to Kershaw, as "X 1," her hatches closed, went under. "The bally river's lit up regardless, like a Gosport chemist's shop on Saturday night. What luck! I never thought we should be able to use the periscope." (A periscope is useless at night against unlighted ships.)

The submarine, her presence undreamt of by the complacent enemy, stole up the river, passing unseen under the muzzles of a hundred guns, the least of which could destroy her. There were many warships of the smaller kinds within easy range, but Heron was looking for a worthier target; he would not waste his precious torpedoes—all too few for the work—on the smaller fry while there were Dreadnoughts to be found. Far up the crowded river they ranged, until the hot glow of Ludwigshafen's busy dockyards lit the sky, but never a Dreadnought could they see.

"Confound 'em, they *must* be here!" said Heron, his face pressed to the hood of the periscope. "But where have the beggars got to? We must go up for a look-see, Bunny!"

"It's deuced risky," said Kershaw doubtfully.

"What isn't—here?" replied Heron. "Up you go, Bunny! Take my night-glasses, an' keep your eyes skinned."

He brought the submarine to the surface, keeping her hull submerged, and her tower a bare yard above water—a risky but necessary precaution—while Kershaw opened the hatch and swept the dark river with the night-glasses. In less than a minute he had the answer to the riddle. Not a mile away rose the high concrete wall of the dockyards, a black mass against the lighted sky, and beyond it a forest of masts stood out sharply, jet-black against the glare. To a landsman they would have conveyed no special meaning, but Kershaw read as from an open book the size and power of the ships beneath them. He closed the hatch and hurried down the ladder.

"Ten big ships in the outer basin of the docks," he announced. "Four battle-cruisers and their Third battle-squadron. What are we to do?"

"We'll wait for something to turn up," said Heron hopefully. "The night's young yet, an' some of them *may* come out at high water. If they do they'll get bent! Hop up again, Bunny, an' look out for a snug place to hide in."

Guided by the starlight and the reflection of the shore-lights in the water, they found a long line of coal-laden lighters moored out of the fairway near the north bank of the river. The water was just deep enough for the submarine, and after intricate navigation among buoys and mooring-ropes — some half-seen and others avoided by guesswork —they brought "X 1" alongside and sank her on the bottom, so that her tower alone was visible.

Heron mounted the ladder, rested his arms on the coaming of the hatch, and settled himself for a long vigil. At any moment one of the passing vessels might come close enough to detect the submarine, but despite this ever-present danger, Heron found a strange fascination in this midnight watch in the heart of the enemy's stronghold. Picket-boats, colliers, an occasional warship, fussy tugs with deep-laden lighters from the inland canals, passed in unending procession; there was a bewildering display of lights, white and coloured, and over the water came the hum and clangour of the dockyards, its intensity at that late hour a sure sign that some great move was in preparation.

"Something big's in the wind," thought Heron. "And we'll spoil Fritz's little game if all goes well. But, oh! for a smoke!"

Slowly the rising tide lapped higher and higher round the conning-tower until the water was a bare foot below its top. It was high tide, and now, if ever, the big ships would begin to move. Heron started suddenly and caught up the night-glasses, for he thought he saw, in the midst of a black blur that represented a mighty pair of dock-gates, a narrow line of light. It was so, and beyond the gates two tall steel masts were coming slowly into line as a great ship swung towards the entrance-lock of the basin. Heron leant over and gave an order that braced every man on board to instant readiness.

"Stand by!"

The line of light was widening; the masts, now in line, were gliding nearer to the gate, and beyond them two more began to move. Sirens wailed and signal-lights flickered; a picket-boat tore down the river at full speed, a leather-lunged man in her bows roaring orders through a megaphone, clearing the river. The water hissed out of the submarine's tanks, she rose slightly to clear the bottom and hung poised, her motors turning slowly ahead. The dock-gates yawned wide to reveal the lights of two tugs, and behind them the towering upper works of a big ship, dead black against the pale sky.

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Slowly the huge bulk of the battleship slid out into the river; she swung ponderously in mid-stream, cast off her tugs, and moved slowly down towards the sea. After her in slow succession came five others, and when the bow of the last appeared in the entrance-lock Heron waited no longer. Six mighty battleships, overlords, by sheer right of power, of all the lesser shipping, moved majestically down the river, and it was as if heralds went before them blowing trumpets, for the picket-boats preceded them and the megaphones were never silent, parting the traffic to left and right with hoarsely-shouted orders. And after those six Titans, weaving in and out among ships moored and under way, moved a slender, vertical black object, bearing a narrow, cowled head that turned incessantly to left and right in ceaseless vigilance, and beneath it glided the submarine's long, slim hull.

The submarine was moving now at her utmost under-water speed of twelve knots, and gradually she drew level with the leader of the long line of battleships, keeping half-a-mile away to port. Heron held on until he had the flagship on his starboard quarter; then the helm went over, and "X 1" swung round to the attack; every man on board felt that movement and drew a long, expectant breath, for the moment for which they had lived through toilsome months was at hand.

The shore lights were far astern now, and in the darkness the battleship's hull was invisible. But her port light flamed like a fierce red eye in the periscope's field of view, and with such a mark it was impossible to miss. Shaking with excitement, Heron swiftly made his calculation of range, speeds, and courses; he waited for a few seconds to make sure of his aim, and as he waited he thought of the hellish forces of destruction and revenge that his next word would unchain. The red light was now in the very centre of his vision.

"Fire!" And three torpedoes were far on their way before a man could draw breath. Seconds that seemed hours, and then, dulled by distance, but still tremendous, the triple crash of the explosions. The periscope was down now, and the submarine circling under water to gain position for the next attack. Above, blind panic spread unchecked from ship to ship; searchlight-beams blazed fanwise from the bridges of the ships and swept the sea, quick-firing guns fired madly at anything, at nothing; destroyers raced up with flaming funnels, their guns spitting red flame at every wave-shadow; trained and experienced gunners took the very channel-buoys for the conning-towers of submarines and blew them to pieces at point-blank range, and the rolling thunder of the guns echoed over the land and startled the householders for twenty miles. And in the heart of that maelstrom of terror and confusion a great ship, mortally stricken, heeled slowly over on her wounded side, lay there for a minute as if making a last fight for life, and went down, the water above her black with the heads of her thousand men.

Circling on the outskirts of the turmoil, Heron raised the periscope to look for the second battleship, and saw the white bow-wave of a light cruiser bearing down on him at full speed. Blessing the all-revealing searchlights, he dived in time, and ten seconds later the thunder of driven screws overhead told how narrow had been the escape. When next he looked the second ship had passed on out of range, but the third, gigantic in the gloom, was close at hand. He had kept his fourth torpedo-tube in hand for just such a chance and fired instantly. Down went the periscope and a hail of shells tore the water where it had disappeared.

Diving deeply as he dared, Heron steered the ship clear of the converging rush of three destroyers, and waited in vain for the roar of the torpedo—it had missed. He did not know that his devilish missile, its white wake bright under the beam of a chance searchlight, had passed within two fathoms of the battleship's bow. Her captain was but human, and he had not a second to think; he put his helm hard over and promptly cut a hurrying destroyer clean in two. To add to the mad confusion of that moment, the next ship in line was taken unawares by this sudden change of course. She turned too late, and despite all efforts the two ships collided with a cataclysmal shock.

Heron, forty feet under water, navigating blindly by luck, instinct, and the thunder of the whirling screws above him, saw nothing of this, but when four more torpedoes had been run into the tubes and he was ready for further destruction, he raised the periscope. Dimly he saw, in a dazzle of searchlights, the two ships locked together, and guessed what had happened. Even as he looked the blinding beams were dulled, for the wind had changed and white wisps of mist were driving across the water. Seizing his last chance, he fired all four torpedoes at random into a boiling riot of scared ships. A racing destroyer broke in two and sank in a whirl of flame and smoke; a light cruiser, hit by mere chance fairly abreast of her fore magazine, blew up with a tremendous explosion, and then the mist blotted out everything and the attack was over.

Heron slid limply from his place and leant

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Heron sprang forward across the open hatch, struck up the pistol with his left hand, and got home with his right on the German's chin. The man reeled back, slipped, and fell over the edge of the conning-tower to the deck. [*Page 394, col. 1.*]

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

shivering against a bulkhead, for the reaction from the intolerable nervous tension of the past hour left him weak as a child.

"Take her over, Bunny," he said weakly. "I'm—I'm done to a turn!"

"Shall we try for the channel?" asked Kershaw, vainly trying to steady his voice, for he, too, had been tried to the limit of endurance.

"No, we'd never get her through in this state," muttered Heron thickly. "No, run for the open, cut across into the Altona mouth. They mayn't be ready for us there, an' you might scrape through the mines. Get out if you can."

He went slowly forward to his cabin and collapsed on his cot, while "X 1" slid forward towards the open sea and her slender chance of safety among the unknown dangers of the minefields. Behind her a battleship, a cruiser, and two destroyers lay on the bottom with more than half of their crews; two battleships, one with a great gash in her side and the other with a rent and twisted bow, were creeping slowly up the river, and the men of fifty ships were waking in shame from a nightmare of panic and disaster.

III.

Heron woke with a start from a heavy sleep. Kershaw, his face lined and drawn with weariness, was shaking him by the shoulder.

"What's up?" cried Heron, uneasily conscious that the engines were silent and the ship motionless.

"Nets!" said Kershaw heavily. "We're fairly caught, the batteries have run down, an' I can't budge her a yard ahead or astern."

"Where are we?"

"Somewhere off the Altona River, an' nearly through the outer minefield. Rotten luck, in ten minutes more we should have been clear."

"Can she rise?"

"Don't know. There's a patrol sniffing about up above, an' I didn't care to try."

But for the intervention of a miracle it was the end, and they knew it.

"Oh, well, we've done our job, anyway," said Heron after a silence. "And when the Huns reckon up the bill they'll find we've come expensive. How the deuce did you get so far, Bunny?"

"Sheer luck!" Kershaw grinned in spite of his exhaustion. "I cut across into the Altona River an' hung about waitin' for the fog to clear. It thinned a bit at five o'clock, an' I spotted a Hun submarine going out. She was running on the surface at half speed, showing a private signal—white-red-white—to keep the Hun patrols from strafing her by mistake, I suppose. I kept the periscope on those blessed lights an' stuck to her tail while she wriggled through the mines. We were nearly through when the fog got thick again an' I lost her. Then a patrol came along, an' in dodging her I dived too deep an' ran slap into these beastly nets—an' here we are. Sorry, old chap!"

"Never mind, Bunny!" said Heron warmly, realising how much of endeavour and achievement lay behind that bald narrative. "You've done jolly well; I never expected we'd get so far. Now come along, an' we'll see what can be done."

The batteries which fed the electric motors were almost exhausted by a night of underwater cruising, and the weakened motors could not move the ship, but Heron blew the water out of the ballast-tanks, and slowly she began to rise, with a grinding sound from without as steel cables slid over the smooth plates of her hull. Her bows, held down by the nets, stopped rising, but her stern went on until it was almost impossible to stand on the steeply-sloping decks. Then she stopped entirely, and their hearts almost stopped with her, but some fastening of the nets parted with a jerk, and in a moment she was on the surface. Heron hurried on deck and clambered down from the conning-tower to examine the tangle of nets which still held the ship's bow, but the case was hopeless, for nearly the whole of the forward superstructure was under water, and the nets were out of sight, to be reached only by divers.

It was daylight already, and the fog was shredding away rapidly before a freshening breeze, which bore to Heron's ears the rapidly-approaching beat of engines. He darted back to the shelter of the conning-tower and peered cautiously over its rim. A motor patrol-boat with a light quickfirer in her bows came out of the thinning fog and circled round the submarine, her crew staring with avid eyes. Heron shot a warning whisper down the hatch.

"Bunny, muster the men at all three hatches an' tell 'em to jump like blazes when I whistle. It's only a motor-boat, an' I mean to capture the beggar if I can."

The petty-officer in command of that patrol-boat had only ten men with him, and had he been wise he would have kept clear and signalled for assistance, but he was dazzled by this glorious chance of capturing a British submarine singlehanded. He had seen at a glance what had happened to "X 1," and—committing the gross error of judging British sailormen by German standards—he thought the crew of a netted submarine would not show fight. He was mistaken. As the patrol-boat bumped alongside a shrill whistle

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

sounded and a swarm of unwashed, unkempt, and wholly irresistible Berserks rose from the submarine's hatches and hurled themselves aboard. The Germans had no time to fire a shot, for the fight was over before it had well begun, and in two minutes the most surprised patrol-crew in the whole German Navy were prisoners in their own cabin, under an armed guard.

"Neat, Tony — very neat!" chuckled Kershaw. "But what shall we do with the prize?"

"Since 'Abandon ship' is the next move, I fancy she'll come in handy," said Heron drily. "Put some grub and water into her, Bunny, an' get the crew aboard as quick as you know how. Something bigger may turn up any minute.

"It's only a three-hundred-mile run home," he continued when all was done and the close-packed crew were huddled aboard the boat. "Even if her tanks won't hold out, some of our people are sure to pick you up."

Kershaw turned on him instantly.

"Lord, man, you don't mean to stay?"

"Must!" said Heron. "I've got to scuttle the ship, an' do it thoroughly too, or they'll raise her an' put her into the German Navy."

"Then I'll wait till it's done."

"No," said Heron. "We've lost the ship, but I won't risk losing thirty of the smartest men in the Trade while there's a chance of getting them away. Off you go, Tony, an' look sharp!"

"But I can't leave you here," gulped Kershaw. "Look here, old man, *I* ran her into these beastly nets—let me stay!"

"Don't be a sentimental ass, Bunny," said Heron, smiling. "I'm not going down with the ship or any rot like that; I mean to get away in the dinghy when the job's done. If *you* were her skipper, would you leave her?"

"You're right, Tony—I'm hanged if I would," said Kershaw after a pause. "Good-bye, old chap, and good luck!"

Heron stared after the crowded boat until she vanished in the mist, and felt very lonely. Then he went below, carefully closed the hatches, set his teeth hard—for it required a considerable amount of nerve to descend alone into the depths from which, single-handed, he might never raise the submarine—and sank the ship to the bottom. Thus secured against interruption, he went forward to the torpedo-tubes. The two remaining torpedoes lay side by side in their crotches on the deck. Heron looked at the long, shining, sinister objects, and pondered in his mind a very knotty problem.

He intended to use the tremendous explosive power of the torpedoes to wreck his ship beyond the possibility of salvage, and since torpedoes and their gear are provided with elaborate safety devices to render that very thing impossible, he knew it would be no light task to persuade those twin slumbering devils to slay their parent. Presently he took a tool from a rack, attacked one of the torpedoes, and with some difficulty detached the "war-head" with its heavy explosive charge from the body of the torpedo. He rolled the ponderous thing aft along the deck into the engine-room and placed it between the silent engines, where in exploding it must infallibly wreck the whole afterpart of the ship. This was but the beginning of his labours, and hours had passed before everything was ready. Then he opened the air-valves, the last of the compressed air hissed into the tanks, driving out the water-ballast, and the submarine rose to the surface.

Heron took a last look round the dimly-lighted interior, and there was a lump in his throat, for "X 1" was his first command, and he knew her as a lover knows the face of his beloved. Then he mounted slowly into the conning-tower, paying out with infinite care as he went a thin line, which was knotted at its lower end to two others. One of these ran forward to the torpedo in the bows, the other to the "war-head" in the stern, and Heron had so juggled with their detonators and safety devices that a sharp jerk on his line would explode both of them, ripping the hull from stem to stern. Carefully he laid the end of the line across the edge of the hatch and stepped out on the deck.

As his eyes came above the level of the canvas dodger—it had been rigged before the crew left, and he had not troubled to remove it—he started, for a German destroyer lay less than a cable's length ahead.

"Good morning!" said a mocking voice behind him, and he spun round on his heel, to look squarely into the barrel of a revolver held by a German naval officer in faultless uniform. Alongside lay a dinghy with four men in her, all armed. Astern was another and larger destroyer, and a whaler full of men was pulling towards the submarine. Heron had a desperate impulse to throw himself down in the hope of reaching his line before he was stopped by a bullet, but the pistol was not a yard from his head, and he dismissed the idea as hopeless.

"Please don't move," said the German in excellent English. "If you attempt to warn your men you will be shot."

"Sorry to disappoint you," said Heron, talking to gain time. "But I'm the only man on board; I sent my crew away long ago." And he explained the incident of the patrol-boat.

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

"So!" said the German, frowning. "I might have know that fool Engelhardt would get into trouble." He believed Heron's tale because he had been sent out to ascertain why the patrol-boat had not returned; otherwise, being a Prussian, and therefore incapable of understanding a gentleman, he would have dismissed it as a cunning but transparent fiction.

"So you remained on board alone, doubtless to scuttle the ship," he said. "Too late now, I—— *Ach!*" He had seen Heron's tell-tale line at the edge of the hatchway and guessed its meaning. He started forward instinctively, and the movement turned the pistol-barrel aside. Instantly Heron sprang forward across the open hatch, struck up the pistol with his left hand, and got home with his right on the German's chin. The man reeled back, slipped, and fell over the edge of the conning-tower to the deck. Heron flung himself flat beside the hatch, and his fingers closed round the line.

"Good-bye, old girl!" he whispered, and pulled sharply.

He found himself in the water, deafened, half stunned, and almost choked by fumes, clinging to the keel of the overturned dinghy and tossing in a whirlpool of water lashed into fury by the blast of the explosion. The boat's crew had vanished, but presently a head appeared, and he helped a dazed German to a safe hand-hold beside him. Then he looked round for assistance, but the whaler which had been coming from the second destroyer was pulling rapidly back to the ship. The smaller destroyer was already under way and steaming eastward with smoke pouring from her funnels; and as soon as her boat had hooked on the other destroyer followed. Shivering with the chill of the icy water, Heron looked to seaward. A long black bar of smoke streaked the westward sky, and under it was a British destroyer flotilla, steaming towards him at full speed.

IV.

Heron came to himself in the Commander's bunk aboard the flotilla-leader, and lay there warm and glowing, with a feeling of utter peace.

"Sorry we cut it so fine, Tony," said a voice, and he looked up to see the self-same Lieutenant-Commander who had sat joyfully on his chest in the club smoking-room only two days before.

"You were all in, an' no mistake, when we got to you," said the Commander, seating himself on the edge of the bunk and pouring hot cocoa into a mug from a Thermos flask. "Lucky for you we happened to pick up your crew; they told us what a fix you were in an' we came along hell-for-leather. Your second was nearly crazy about you—thirty-five knots wasn't enough for him, an' he wanted to get out an' push!"

"Hullo, Bubbles, did you bag those destroyers?" said Heron weakly.

"What a glutton you are, Tony!" chuckled the Commander. "From what Kershaw told me you've sampled the whole blooming German Navy from battleships down to patrol-boats—you lucky devil!—an' now you want to begin again. No, we saw nothing but their tails, as usual. Now drink this an' go to bye-bye like a good boy!"

And Heron fell asleep to the tune of humming turbines driving the ship along at twenty knots for home.

FORTUNES OF WAR.

The Scotsman sighed and shook his head:
"We lost our pipes in one retreat——"
"How very sad!" the maiden said,
"Their music is so strange and sweet.

"First rising shrill, barbaric, wild,
To cheer you on to victory;
Then crooning like a little child
Who nestles on his mother's knee

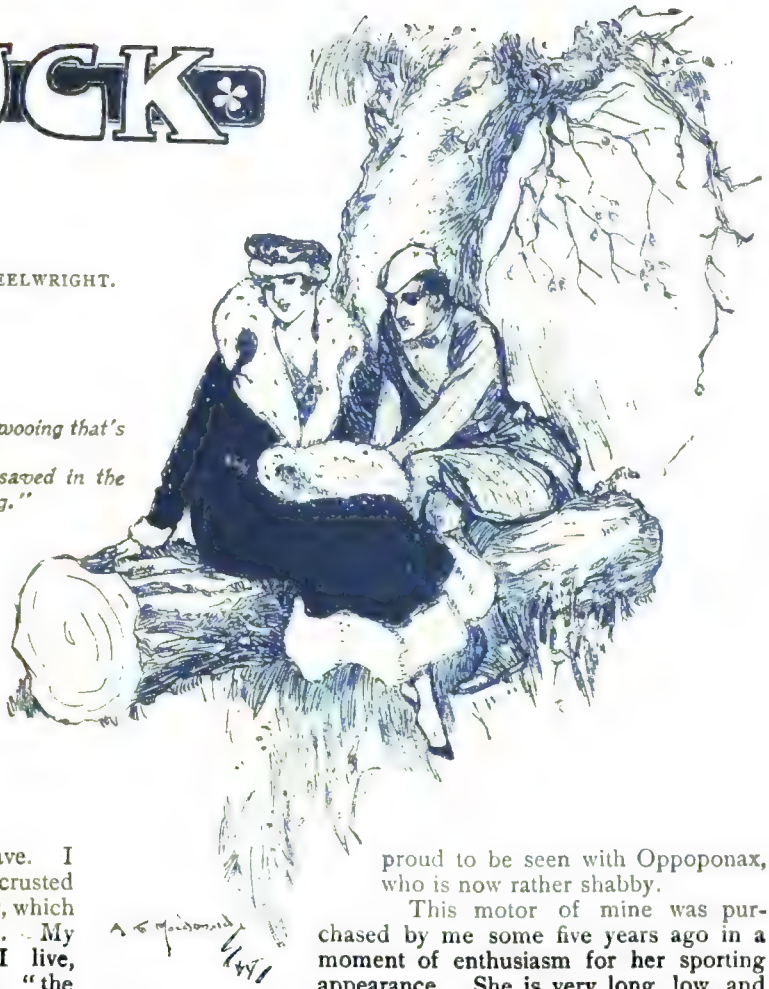
"And now no more they will be heard,
Ah! what a cruel loss for you!"
The man at last got in a word,
Said he: "We lost our baccy, too!"

Leslie Mary Oyler.

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

LUCK

By J. E. Wheelwright.



"Thrice happy's the wooing that's not long adoing,
So much time is saved in the billing and cooing."

I had a week's leave. I had also a fine old crusted pre-war pattern motor, which lives in a cowshed. My Aunt, with whom I live, calls this cowshed "the garage," but I prefer the original title, especially when there is a real cow—Dotty, by name and by nature—in one of the stalls.

Dotty and I were in the cowshed together gazing at the said motor. She looked at it scornfully over her right shoulder. I had been very industrious for the last two hours, and Dotty despised me; Dotty never worked or did anything but eat and doze. Too old to do anything but become bully beef, she dreams away her existence beside Oppoponax (my motor-car is called Oppoponax for short). My Aunt and Dotty were brought up together, and Aunt looks upon her as a sort of poor relation, and will not have her eaten.

The garage, or cowshed, was littered with tools, for this was a field-day in the life of Oppoponax. She was to take Doris and me for a jaunt in Town.

Doris is one of the few people not too proud to be seen with Oppoponax, who is now rather shabby.

This motor of mine was purchased by me some five years ago in a moment of enthusiasm for her sporting appearance. She is very long, low, and racy in build, is painted a sad steel grey, and has disc wheels. Her outside speed limit is about thirty miles per hour, but in the dear old days, when there were plenty of leisured policemen, they invariably got out their notebooks and licked their pencils whenever I hove in sight. She always gave them time to take her number and all particulars as she drifted slowly past, and cost me a good deal in fines.

Of course, Doris is young—all persons called Doris were born about the same year, I find. I know several—a sound brand.

All was ready. With a mighty effort I cleared up the spanners, nuts, odd tyres, jacks, pumps, horns, and other musical instruments, and dragged out my secret store of petrol. As I did so, I spied a rusty horseshoe. The petrol hides under a bundle of hay in Dotty's stall, and, lifting the hay and the can, I found the horseshoe sitting waiting for me. I felt constrained to take

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

the horrible thing with me—rust and nails and all—and managed to hang it on the bonnet.

Before filling up the tank, I gave the inside of the car a flick with an oily rag to smarten it up. Doris had left her fur coat there. She would meet me at the cowshed, she said, as she did not particularly wish her family to see the start. Neither did I, for various reasons, the chief one being that Oppoponax took anything from a quarter-of-an-hour to two hours to get going.

I picked up the fur coat and looked at it.

"Quite a dressy little affair, this," I said to Dotty, who gave an impatient kick. Dotty herself looks rather moth-eaten. I wondered what fur coats cost. This was black fur with white fur round the hem part and a great deal more on the collar.

"Do you have to buy your wife a lot of these things if you marry?" I wondered. "Does Doris have several in the year? I suppose she would want one or two, and other clothes as well, beside food and a house."

I had spent most of my life since I left school in further India, where the women don't wear fur coats, so was rather in the dark. I had thought a good deal about marriage lately, and Doris has been rather nice to me.

She seems to like me in my uniform—the Flying Corps get-up *is* rather attractive. Still, she only fills in odd moments with me, I believe. To-day, for instance, she and I were to lunch at the *Dorée*, and Doris was bringing another man. I had a sort of feeling I was to stand the other chap a lunch and then disappear. I had been caught before like that, I reflected, as I filled up the petrol-tank.

I applied myself to the starting-handle. Half-an-hour later I was still applying myself to the starting-handle, and feeling extremely warm. Mopping my forehead and telling Oppoponax just what I thought of her, I gave one terrific turn.

Bang! Thump!

Something happened then! I found myself leaning against Dotty's side with a horrid pain in my wrist.

I felt her sides bulge in a huge sigh; at first I thought she had kicked me.

But no! It was Oppoponax—she had done me this time—treated me to a back-fire and probably broken my wrist.

As I removed myself from Dotty's side Doris entered the cowshed.

"All ready?" she said brightly.

I held out my right hand, speechless. It had turned blue and puffy, and was already rather painful.

Doris was wonderfully kind abo[ut] sweet and sympathetic, but quite de[ter]mined not to forego the lunch at the *D*[orée] the other chap.

"I can't do any good by waiting here, can I?" she pleaded. "That won't mend it." Some people have almost too much common-sense.

"I'll catch the train," she continued; "you go to the Doctor's, and come on later, if you possibly can. I must go. The Major will be waiting."

Major, indeed! Hang the Major! And me a mere Flight-Lieutenant!

"What a jolly coat!" I said, helping her into it. "Just like an old black rabbit I once had! Do these things cost much?"

"Rabbit!" she said, aghast; "it cost about eighty pounds. It's seal, and all this is ermine!"

"That settles it!" I thought. It's very sad. One gets a good many shillings a day as a Flight-Lieutenant, but it doesn't run to many of these; so no marriage for me at present. It was rather a relief, on the whole.

My wrist hurt a bit, but I managed to shut the cowshed up. Just as I was leaving, the horseshoe caught my eye. It had not been much good as yet, but, nevertheless, it must come with me. So into my big coat-pocket it went.

Later, I emerged from the doctor's surgery, wrist neatly bound up, and hung in a sling round my neck—no bones were broken. Something bruised or bent or ligaments rather pulled about.

Anyhow, there it was—useless. But still it meant more leave.

I just caught a train and jumped in.

At the *Dorée* I was half-an-hour late. There was Doris, standing with her back to me at a table. She wore the fur coat and was talking to a man.

Evidently "the other man."

He was not very thrilling, so I took heart Not even in uniform, and bald—looked as if he would be fussy. I had expected a brass hat at least, knowing Doris. I am quite fond of her, but I know her weaknesses. Going up behind her, I touched her gently on the arm to attract her attention.

She did not turn her head. She was looking at the man—he was intent on the menu—but Doris, pulling off the coat, thrust it into my arms; also she gave me a white muff. She thought I was the waiter. Not very flattering!

I looked reverently at the valuable coat as it hung on my arm, and crept away with the precious burden to put it on a stand.

Seeing some pegs near the door on the

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Doris entered the cowshed. "All ready?" she said brightly. "I held out my right hand, speechless. It . . . was already rather painful.

farther side of it, I made for these, and did a good deal of damage getting there. I have enormous feet, as I am rather big all over, and having only one hand made it worse. But I succeeded in hooking it on to a peg, also the muff.

I had nearly pressed my way back to Doris through the crowded room, when I bethought me it was dreadful to leave that valuable garment all unprotected so near the door, and made up my mind to place it nearer headquarters. Threading the maze of tables by a different route, in order to tread on a different set of toes, I went and unhitched the furry garments from their peg. I was nearing the door with the coat in my hand, when I heard a cry of horrified alarm: "He's got my coat!"

The cry proceeded from the person from whose back I had taken the coat—presumed to be Doris. Her blue eyes were turned upon me, wide open and blazing with anger and surprise. They were not the eyes of Doris, however, but those of a perfect stranger. I had made a frightful mistake. And she was really a very perfect stranger, too—I noticed that at once.

Deep-set blue eyes with a fringe of black eyelashes and soft, dark hair. A most radiant vision, but pink with anger at the moment. She looked and looked at me, quite obviously and naturally under the impression that I was stealing her coat and about to slip through the door.

"Bring that here!" she exclaimed.

I drew near, still carrying the coat and muff. "What the—why the——" spluttered the man with her. "Sir—sir, as you are evidently a thief masquerading in the King's uniform, I must call—a—er—well, I must do something!"

I was smiling at the girl with the eyes and thinking about her so much that I said nothing at all.

Still, something should be said. It was really very awkward.

"You see, I rather thought you were a frind of mine," I began lamely.

"Friend of yours!" said the girl, with scornful eyes. "Never!" She need not have

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

been so emphatic. She had dimples—I thought she would.

"You see—the coat, I have one—I mean, my friend has one just like it!"

Here a waiter arrived with the first course of their lunch. I was desperately hungry.

The man looked at the *hors d'œuvres*—obviously hungry, too.

"Greedy brute!" I thought. Her husband evidently—what a pity!

"Waiter," he said, "this man's a thief!"

"Yes, sair," answered the waiter with alacrity. "Shall I lay a place for *Monsieur?*"

"No! Thief!" said Baldhead. "Arrest! Police—steal coat!"

"Yes, sair," again said the waiter, and rushed up with many knives and forks. He laid a place and insinuated a chair behind me.

"Look here, Uncle——"

Uncle! I jumped with joy. Not her husband! That was good.

"Uncle, let's have lunch first, or it will get cold. Here's the coat and here's the man—he can't escape, and we shall be stronger after lunch and better able to chase him if he tries to bolt!" said Violet. I had heard the Uncle address her as Violet.

I grinned. I should simply love to be chased by Violet. She tried not to smile, but the dimples became more evident, and she twinkled.

I heard her whisper: "Besides, the unfortunate man is wounded; we can't let him starve, even if he is an impostor."

Violet is really a dear, I thought—this stealing business is rather a success.

The man grunted, and, sitting down, he began to imbibe soup with vigour, straining it through a long, drab moustache.

"Sit down!" he said, rapping his spoon on his plate—the soup had revived him. "I am unable to fast any longer," he spluttered out, "and as you must, presumably, eat somewhere, kindly do so where I can keep an eye on you. Please commence your lunch. After that I will—er—er—take steps."

I sat down. I am not usually so meek, but I was very hungry, and unwilling to have a scene.

Soup appeared before me.

He mopped up the moustache and blew out the ends: "Now, understand," he began, "I am a plain man."

He was; I could have told him that. And a blithering, gobbling idiot, and a lot of other things; but for Violet's sake I refrained, and swallowed my wrath and some soup.

"Look here," he continued, "you had better make a clean breast of it. I believe you were making off with that coat; but if a man of your appearance" (I bowed) "and address" (I bowed again) "has to live by stealing furs, there must be something wrong. If it was sudden temptation, or if there is madness in your family, or you were starving, we will let you off!"

"The story of my life," I began. "I was born——"

"Stop!" he interrupted. "First pull that sling off your arm! That is an obvious fraud."

I did so, and gave them a peep under the bandages at my bruised arm and swollen wrist.

The girl looked sympathetic. She cut up a leg of chicken for me quite prettily, as I could not do it myself.

Alas! Here I got a fearsome shock—she wore a wedding ring. That depressed me. I then cleared my throat, and told them all the true and uninteresting history of Oppoponax, up to the moment of attaching myself to the fur coat. I even told them about Dotty, to give local colour.

Baldhead looked at me. "Liar!" was all he said. "I wonder why you stole the coat?" A brutal man was Uncle.

At that moment a voice said: "Oh, there you are!" and Doris appeared behind me.

She was not wearing her fur coat, worse luck, and was driving in front of her a very young subaltern—a substitute for the Major, I gathered.

Doris looked blankly at our party. An introduction seemed indicated, but awkward. I would have made a rush for the door, but Blue Eyes still looked kind, and I was determined to remain beside her if possible. Besides, I had gone nap on this horseshoe, which was still in my pocket.

I turned to Doris. "Isn't it true I had a back-fire and damaged my wrist?" I demanded.

"Yes, I suppose so," she said rather doubtfully. She was looking at the other girl, and not feeling enthusiastic about me at that moment.

"And isn't it true you have a coat like this?" pointing to it.

"Yes, something," she said indifferently. "I didn't wear it after all. I left it at home."

"Evidently confederates," said the man in a stage-aside. "A gang."

"Well," I continued, "I am the victim of circumstances. Sir," I said politely to Uncle, "may my friends sit at our table? I had promised to meet them here, and they will explain it all to you."

Uncle's niece whispered. He grunted and nodded. "Watch. Watch them carefully," I heard him say to Violet.

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

The others sat down bewildered, with a great rearranging of plates and knives.

It was a dismal feast. Conversation, there was none. I explained; Doris sulked. The subaltern was dumb. I went on and on, repeating my sad tale. I hardly believed it myself in the end, and thought perhaps I really *had* tried to steal the coat.

Doris thought I was up to something, evidently. She had an idea it was a practical joke of some sort, so committed herself to nothing.

Blue Eyes again repeated that she had handed the coat to a waiter.

"What waiter?"

"Oh, he had a red beard and spectacles," she thought.

There was no such person in the room—things looked black for me.

Doris admitted, reluctantly, that she had known me all her life, and had never known me steal before.

She seemed very huffy, and looked crossly at Violet's hat. It was a dear little hat, too—sapphire blue, with a bit of fur on it.

But the Uncle was unconvinced. "Young man," he said pompously, "if you are, as I think, a gang of confederates, going about stealing furs—two of you disguised and in the King's uniform—it is my duty to expose you and lead you to justice. Give me proof of your honesty, or come to the police station."

"Take him home and show him the car and your home, and Dotty and your Aunt," said Doris.

"And my ox and my ass and everything that is mine!" I added irreverently.

"No buffoonery, please!" said Uncle.

We all paid separately and carefully for our several lunches. It had been a water-cooled affair, and the no-treating order had been carried out to the letter in this bleak party.

We left the restaurant in close formation. Uncle carried the fur coat himself. I kept close to Violet; Doris and her subaltern brought up the rear.

Still, there was one good thing—I had met Violet.

We left the restaurant in close formation. Uncle carried the fur coat himself. I kept close to Violet; Doris and her subaltern brought up the rear.

"We ought to be roped together or handcuffed surely," I said, "for this expedition?"

Blue Eyes was inclined to bubble with laughter. A sudden feeling of depression came over me; indigestion perhaps. I felt I should have to trail about with this ridiculous man for hours—and Violet was another's! or why the wedding ring? That gold band saddened me. It is the sort of thing that doesn't worry me as a rule, but this was different. I felt very serious about Violet.

We trooped solemnly to the door and—reached the street.

My heart gave a bound. There, drawn up outside, looking as if nothing had happened, stood Oppoponax. My Aunt's groom-gardener-chauffeur-cowkeeper was on his back underneath the car. Oppoponax always likes a little attention with a spanner.

In the car sat my Aunt, half asleep. "I've been waiting for you hours," she said. "I heard of your trouble, and that you had come

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

here, so got Ham to bring me up." (Ham is the chauffeur, gardener, etc. His name is Hamilton.) Aunt got out of the car.

She and my gaoler (I felt he was my gaoler) met face to face.

"Caroline!" he exclaimed.

"Jimmy Carruthers!" cried my Aunt. Fancy calling this walrus Jimmy!

Turning to me she said: "This is a very old friend of mine. How strange to meet him here! We were boys—I mean, girls—I mean both, together in India."

They stood shaking each other by the hand; they had a great deal to say, and said it.

Then she noticed my party again—my still silent party.

"Introduce me to all your friends, Vincent," she said.

I didn't feel able to, somehow, but made vague noises, and waved my hand to each of them.

"My Aunt — ha — hum — Miss — ha — ha——"

"Ah, there's Doris," said my Aunt, when her nods and smiles had subsided.

"Here's her fur coat. I brought it in case she came back in the car," she continued.

At the word "fur coat" we all started and looked conscious—especially old Carruthers. I shall never like that man. He pulled down his waistcoat, gave a puff to his moustache, and announced:

"Young man, I apologise. Allow me to introduce my niece, Miss Violet Carruthers."

I pretended never to have noticed her before, and bowed with *empressement*, whatever that is.

We all thawed a little then, and allowed ourselves to smile.

"Ridiculous mistake!" said Uncle. "Preposterous!"

"Quite so," I agreed. "Let us all go back to The Cedars for tea, and forget it." My Aunt's home is called The Cedars. Just one cedar and a cowshed.

We all got in or on the car, Uncle in front. We sent the subaltern home; no one seemed to have any use for him. I wanted Doris to take him away, but she declined.

We had a good many stoppages. The final one was a bad puncture; the back [illegible] subsided with a heavy sigh. The Stepney was useless, like a rubber sponge. Ham was permitted to amuse himself with the tyres, while we strolled about.

Violet and I found a comfortable seat under a tree.

She had the white muff in her lap.

"What is this fur?" I said, stroking it.

"It's ermine," said Violet.

I slipped my undamaged hand into the muff; hers was there, too.

The ring was there, on the wedding finger. I twisted it round and round. I found a large pearl on the under side of it—not a wedding ring, anyway. I breathed again.

"Why do you wear this?" I said.

"Why not?" was the demure answer. She has thick, soft eyelashes that flutter in a very attractive way. "My mother gave it me when I was confirmed; I wear it on that finger to make room for a chilblain on the other," she continued, still fluttering.

"Take the beastly thing off," I pleaded.

"Why?"

"It gave me such a horrid fright; the very sight of it upsets me!"

"Then don't look at it." She spread out the pink fingers close to my face.

I slipped the ring off, and kissed the palm; it seemed the only thing to do.

"Someone might like to put another one there some day," I murmured.

Here Ham tooted loudly, and bellowed out: "All ready, sir."

Violet said nothing, but she did not take away her hand. I may here add I did something about supplying another ring, later.

We packed ourselves into the motor again.

That was a delightful evening at The Cedars; such a contrast to lunch. We sang "Auld Lang Syne" after dinner. Why, I hardly know.

Uncle Jimmy has been perpetually at The Cedars ever since. We all call him Uncle now; Violet comes with him, so I don't mind at all.

I have had the strongest belief in horseshoes ever since. Violet's bridesmaids' dresses were simply covered with them.

PLEASE ORDER YOUR "ROYAL!"

If you will all do this we shall know exactly how many copies to print, and the result will be a great saving of paper. Moreover, there is the soldier—or is it a sailor?—to whom you pass on your copy, to consider. You can't disappoint him. The ROYAL will help to keep up his spirits, and "Tommy" fights his best when he is in good spirits. So please order your ROYAL and make sure of it.

Digitized by Google

Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

GETTING THEIR DESERTS.

By Lesbia Robinson.

Fitting Holidays for Folks Who Offend Us. Illustrated by Leading Humorous Artists.

Holidays, like worldly possessions, are very unfairly apportioned. People who do nothing in town for nine months in the year go and do even less at the seaside for the remaining three, while worthy citizens who work hard for their bread are lucky if they can escape from their duties for two weeks out of the fifty-two.

Mrs. Anstruther-Loaf, who does nothing more strenuous than tie ribbons on her pet Chow, goes to an expensive hotel, and is ministered unto by uniformed Cherubim and Seraphim, who conspire to keep up the pleasant illusion that food and drink, purple and fine linen, drop like manna from heaven into the laps of the deserving rich. Mrs. Scramble, who runs single-handed an easy-going husband, four mischief-loving youngsters, and a six-roomed house, has in holiday-time to preside over a cheap and ill-equipped furnished cottage, where her home labours are practically doubled owing to its lack of every modern convenience. Had their holidays been reversed, both would have benefited; as it is, Mrs. Anstruther-Loaf returns to Mayfair limp from too little exercise and too much nourishment; Mrs. Scramble goes back to Tooting equally limp from exactly opposite causes.

The human gasbag who spreads alarming rumours should, according to Mr. Thomas Henry, be sent up in a balloon with a scarecrow as sole companion.

Mr. Treyer Evans suggests that the landlady who considers letters public property might be forced to spend her holiday censoring correspondence.

Some people do not deserve holidays at

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

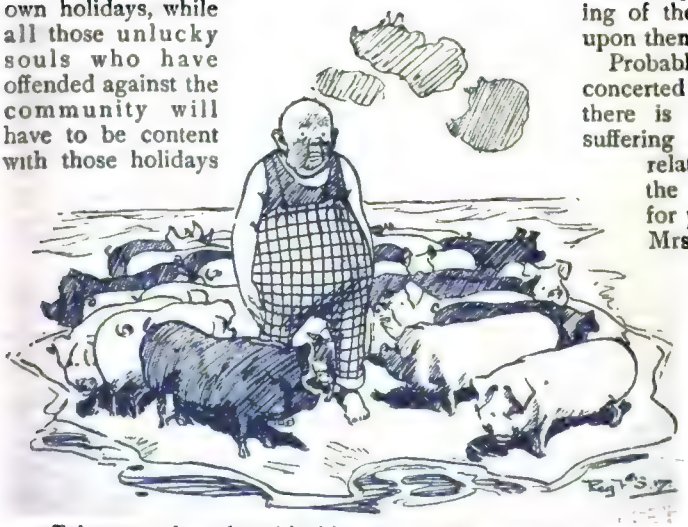
all in the usual sense of the word; solitary confinement or fourteen days' C.B. would, we feel, fit their cases more adequately, and there is no doubt that many of us would derive exceeding great joy from devising holidays specially adapted to the failings of our fellow-creatures.

On the principle of making the punishment fit the crime, we would thankfully consign the conversational bore to a desert island where he could air his views to an audience of uncomplaining cocoanut palms; while the helpless female, who refuses to soil her hands with work, might be condemned to spend two or three weeks washing-up a ceaseless procession of cups and plates at a canteen.

Another person for whom it would be a delight to prescribe is the chronic invalid who confides her most intimate symptoms to you with the blatant frankness of a patent medicine advertisement. A month in sole charge of an isolation hospital would be a fitting punishment, though it would be distinctly hard on the patients.

Mr. Bertram Prance considers that the super-patriot who is always inquiring: "Why aren't you in khaki?" should be banished to some remote spot where the rustics are plainly suspicious of his own civilian attire.

Perhaps it is not too much to hope that in the future only the elect few will be privileged to choose their own holidays, while all those unlucky souls who have offended against the community will have to be content with those holidays which it pleases a committee—consisting of their worst enemies—to inflict upon them.



To be marooned on a desert island in company with numerous pigs is the holiday Mr. Reg. F. Smith has devised for the bacon profiteer.

Probably the time is not yet ripe for concerted action in this respect, but there is no reason why individuals suffering from the vagaries of their relations should not seek to make the holidays a fitting punishment for past offences. This is what Mrs. Bakewell did when her husband insisted on a hot dinner and supper every day throughout the year, allowing her no respite even in the most tropical weather.

It was part of the plan that they should take a cottage in the country, part of the plan also that on the third day Mrs. Bakewell should be taken suddenly

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBR

The girl who pesters the public on flag-days might fittingly be set to haul full-size flags about during her holiday, says Mr. Cottington Taylor.

With his past sins recoiling on his head, Mr. Bakewell approached the liver and bacon in a spirit of aggression. It did not take kindly to his methods, and the result was a leathery substance closely resembling the sole of an Army boot. There were two courses open to him—to own his ability to consume cold meals or to continue to court apoplexy over the stove. His wife left him no choice. With suspicious forethought she had ordered fish, flesh, and fowl for the next day's consumption, and Mr. Bakewell was faced with the necessity of cooking it.

It was when Mrs. Bakewell—still unfit to face a saucepan—suggested ordering two rabbits and a pound of steak for future requirements, that her husband's fortitude gave way, and he abased himself by suggesting cold meals. Mrs. Bakewell, conscious of victory, gave way gracefully, and thereafter enjoyed a measure of ease in culinary matters.

ill in the midst of preparing the dinner, and retire to her bed with realistic groans.

"You must finish the cooking, Herbert," she said. "You mustn't miss your hot dinner, and we can't have the food spoilt."

It was a blazing August day, and it did not take Herbert long to discover that standing over a kitchen fire, attending to the welfare of a joint, a pudding, and two vegetables, was a much overrated occupation. By the time he had eaten of the fruits of his labours, and washed up—in cold water—he was ready to admit that cooking was not the pleasant pastime he had persisted in considering it, and resigned himself to a boiled egg for supper.

It was at this moment that his wife's voice hailed him feebly from the upper regions. "There's liver and bacon for your supper," she informed him. "It must be cooked or it will go bad, and you know you can't eat a cold meal at night."

Mr. Douglas Jefferies' idea of a suitable punishment for the patent medicine maker is a walking tour through a countryside bristling with his own and competitors' advertisements.

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

YOUR OPINION, PLEASE!

IF YOU WERE IN A BURNING HOUSE WITH YOUR MOTHER AND FIANCÉE AND COULD ONLY SAVE ONE, WHICH WOULD YOU SAVE?

THIS is a problem which any man might be called upon to face at a moment's notice. There are others equally difficult in which two possible courses are open. You might be confronted with such a problem, be forced to make a momentous decision. How would you decide?

Below are eight interesting problems. I want to know which alternative you would choose, and your reason for the choice, and I am offering £5 in prizes (one prize of £2 and six prizes of ten shillings each) for the best sets of answers sent in. The problems need not be copied out, but the corresponding number must be placed against each answer, which must not contain more than thirty words. The winning replies will appear in a subsequent number of the ROYAL, together with the views of eminent persons whom we are also consulting.

I hope to publish more of these problems shortly, and am accordingly offering a prize of £1 for the most striking problem sent in. The Editor reserves the right to publish any of the problems so submitted.

PLEASE READ THIS CAREFULLY.

All entries for both competitions must reach this office not later than Monday, September 24th, 1917, and should be addressed to The Editor, THE ROYAL MAGAZINE, 18 Henrietta Street, London, W.C. 2. Mark your envelope "Problem" in the top left-hand corner.

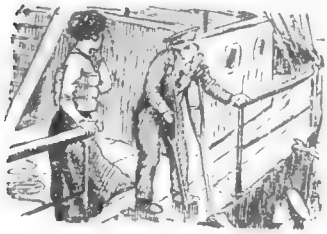
The following are the problems upon which I invite your opinions:

1. An English girl before the war became engaged to a German who is now interned. Should she be faithful to him, or give him up?

♥ ♥ ♥

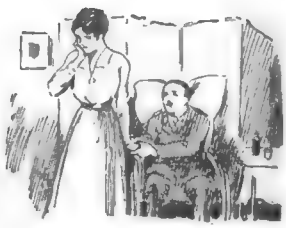
2. A man is dying in hospital but is unaware of the fact. Should the chaplain be summoned to his bedside, thus revealing his hopeless condition, or should he be allowed to die without knowledge of his approaching end?

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBR



3. A ship is torpedoed; there is room for one person in a boat. The choice lies between a woman, young and strong, and a cripple soldier. Which should be saved?

♥ ♥ ♥

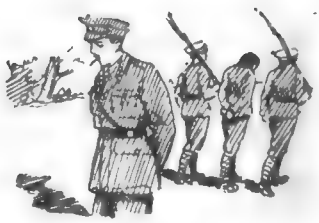


4. A man severely wounded has only a year to live. He is in love with a woman who can give him only friendship. Is she justified in marrying him for the sake of brightening his last days on earth?

♥ ♥ ♥

5. A girl finds an escaped German prisoner obviously dying unless first-aid is rendered. Should she render it or leave him to his fate?

♥ ♥ ♥



6. An officer while at the Front has to shoot for cowardice the brother of the girl he loves? Is he justified in marrying her without confessing?

♥ ♥ ♥

7. A man who is a very poor swimmer sees a woman drowning. It is almost certain death for him to try and save her. He has a wife and family to support. Should he jeopardise their future by making the attempt?

♥ ♥ ♥

8. A girl whose life is rather a grey one has an invitation to spend a month with wealthy friends in the country. The visit will mean a lot of new clothes, for which she will have little use afterwards. Is she justified in using money which she would otherwise have put into the War Loan, for such a purpose?

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

For "Soldiers and Sailors Too"

All the contributions on this page were sent in by officers and men serving in H.M. Forces. A pack of ROYAL playing-cards or a silver pencil-case is given for every accepted storyette, joke, bit of verse, or drawing sent in by a sailor or soldier. Please say which gift you prefer, and address envelopes to The O.C., ROYAL MAGAZINE, 18 Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

EQUAL TO THE EMERGENCY.

During the German East African campaign, a private in the 25th Fusiliers (Frontiersmen) was promoted to lance-corporal. As the promotion happened in the bush—miles away from the base, and chevrons were not obtainable—he marked his promotion in indelible pencil on the sleeve of his only shirt (a greyback).

A few days later, for some minor offence, he was reduced to the ranks again, and was rather puzzled what to do with the stripe which he was no longer entitled to wear.

He solved the problem, however, and appeared on parade next morning with the word "Cancelled" written in large blue letters over his stripe.

POSTED AS MISSING.

When I spilt all my soup on my trousers,
It left such a horrible stain;
I was told that the marks would all vanish,
If I left my pants out in the rain.

So the first rainy evening I left them
In the garden on top of some plants;
In the morning the stains had all vanished,
By thunder! and so had my pants!

KAMERAD!

UNCLE (to Tommy, aged seven, playing at war game with another small boy): "If you take the fortress within a quarter-of-an-hour I'll give you sixpence."

TOMMY (a minute later): "I've taken it; give me the sixpence, uncle."

UNCLE (producing the coin): "How did you manage it so quickly?"

TOMMY (ingenuously): "I promised Billy threepence, and he surrendered."

WELL CARED FOR.

Private Jimson, relating his experiences of the war, declared that after being taken prisoner by the enemy he was stripped of his clothing.

"Did you feel the cold much?" asked a friend.

"No," replied Jimson, "not at all. You see, they carefully covered me with rifles."

TIDINESS IN THE TRENCHES.

LADY: "I want a useful present for my son in the trenches."

TOBACCONIST: "Pipe? Tobacco-pouch? Cigarettes?"

LADY: "No, he has plenty of those. Have you any pretty ash-trays?"

TOMMY (reading letter from home): "——and the noise, dear, when the Zeps came over! You never heard anything like it!"

Google

THE RACOON.

By Dorothy E. Paul.

"He was a man, take him for all in all,
I shall not look upon his like again."

I.

Basking in the all-welcome sunshine of a spring afternoon, the Rest House at Ninety-Mile wore a lazy air of placid content.

Inside sat a party of settlers destined for "up country"—a man and his wife and a little girl of about eight. They were enjoying the quiet and rest, when presently a head was cautiously raised above the outside ledge of the window, and a face peered through. The sun's rays were momentarily obscured, and an Indian seated by the stove glanced up to see the reason.

Instantly the peaceful atmosphere was changed as if by magic. The red-man gave a yell and leapt to his feet, a couple of domino-players overturned the table in their efforts to reach the door, while the landlord endeavoured to scale the counter at a jump.

"What on earth's the matter?" queried the settler, who sat on the window side of the room and had seen nothing.

"It's the Racoon," replied the landlord, regaining his feet. "There's a matter of a thousand dollars on that fellow, alive or dead. He's been giving the whole county a run for the money for the past six months, and I guess he only showed himself out of bravado. He was chiefly concerned in the murder of One-Time Jake. Heard of him? No?"

"It isn't positively certain that the Racoon killed old One-Time," broke in one of the three men who had returned unsuccessful from the chase, "only the fellow's given the Mounted such a lot of trouble that they've got their knife into him anyway, and I reckon they've fixed it up all right for him where the murder is concerned."

At this juncture the settlers made preparations for departure. Two more days' journey lay ahead of them before they reached the few acres of land which the man had purchased. It had already been partially cleared by the former owner, and a shack stood ready for the newcomers.

"What excitement in the Rest House just now," said the woman—"just like a Wild West show, wasn't it, Jim?"

"You're right. Wonder what like of fellow he was, this Racoon? Wish we'd been opposite the window, eh? Fancy, a thousand dollars to take him, alive or dead! He must be a desperate character."

"He murdered a man!" whispered the woman in shocked tones. "Not but what I think there are crimes just as bad as murder—hot-blooded, provoked murder, of course. For instance, I cannot bear mean crimes—lying and thieving. There's something so low about a thief!"

The man prodded a mutinous pack-horse with the stock of his whip and gave a short laugh.

"I like to hear you moralising, Lyd," he said, "you're so pretty when you're solemn. Give me a kiss, girlie!"

"Why, Jim," laughed the woman tenderly, as she complied with his desire, "you're as sentimental as when we were first married."

"And why not?" retorted the man warmly. "D'you suppose I'm going to care less for you just because we've been married nine years?"

"Ah, no!" She linked her arm through his. "But, do you know, someone once said you had a fickle nature, and that you only played with the hearts of women. I'd be glad to meet that person now and give them the lie!" Her voice rang proudly.

"Yes, give 'em the lie, Lyddy! Tell them, who ever says anything against me, that I've always been true and faithful to you!"

His face flushed darkly, and for a moment the brightness of his eye was clouded as though with some unpleasant memory.

II.

It was just at that time in the afternoon when the slanting rays of the sun were losing

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

their power and failing to pierce so brightly through the trees. Although it was not his usual hour, the great horned owl from his tree-top gave forth his booming cry; not quite the sonorous, awe-inspiring note of later hours, but sufficiently loud and unexpected to startle considerably a little girl who was playing beneath the trees.

She became suddenly aware of the fact that the woodland was no longer a place of filtering sunshine and filled with the silvery notes of the chicadee, but had become a region of frightening stillness and creeping shadows. Without a doubt home was the best place to be in, so she set off at a run, and the quicker she ran the more nervous she grew, so that, peering over her shoulder and not watching her footsteps, she fell. Not very much hurt, but considerably frightened, she began to cry, burying her little face in the leaf-strewn ground.

"What's the matter, kid?" asked a voice which seemed to come from a very long way above her.

Surprise checked her sobs, and she looked up to encounter the kindly, amused gaze of a very tall man with a very brown face. He was dressed in fringed shirt and leggings and wore a coon-skin cap on his head, and was altogether so different from anyone she had ever seen, that she decided he must be one of the wizards or fairy men of the forest of whom her mother used to tell her.

With her great brown eyes she surveyed him with mingled curiosity and awe.

"Please, are you a wizard?" she asked.

"Why, sure I am," he replied.

This cleared the way considerably.

"Do you live here?" she queried next.

"Hereabouts."

She thought for a moment. Wizards, she knew, cast spells and worked charms. She wondered whether this one would help to make it a little easier to obtain the necessaries of life back in her home.

"What do you do, please, Mr. Wizard?"

"Whiz off mostly," he rejoined, with a chuckle. Then he stooped and examined the child's knee, which was slightly grazed. "Nothing serious, kid," he said. As he knelt he was about level with her eyes, and he stared at her in a puzzled way. It was his turn to question.

"What's your name?" he asked.

"Lyddy."

"Lyddy what?"

She thought a moment. "Just Lyddy," she then replied.

"Just Lyddy, eh? Where do you live?"

"Over there." She waved vaguely in the direction of the foothills.

He was silent a moment, and the child prattled on, telling him she liked coming into the forest, but it was a long way from the shack, and she grew nervous when it became dark. He listened attentively, and suggested that whenever she was in the forest and felt lonely or nervous, she should come to the spot where she now was and then cry "Coo-ee!" and he would appear.

Lyddy clapped her hands delightedly; it was just the very thing a wizard would do. She imitated the cry after him and took particular notice of the spot, and for future guidance he blazed the tall tree beneath which they stood. He then looked at her very solemnly.

"Wizards, you know," he said, "never grant favours without exacting certain conditions which must be most strictly obeyed, so you must promise never to call for me unless you are really lonely or nervous, and, if I do not answer, you must not try to find me, for I may be with the fairies. Also"—here he grew quite stern and held up a finger impressively—"you must never, never tell anyone you have seen me, not even father or mother, nor bring anyone to this spot."

She promised to obey him, and, flinging her arms round his neck, she kissed him, and then turned homewards. Once she looked back to wave, but the wizard-man had vanished.

Lyddy stuck to her promise and never told her parents whom she met in the forest. After a while she had no need of the blazed tree to locate the spot, and one call in her shrill, childish treble always brought him. Where he came from she could never quite tell, but she had an idea that a certain very thick growth of bushes, which might have hidden a cave or tunnel, was in some way connected with his dwelling-place.

Thus the summer and the autumn weeks stole away, and by and by Lyddy found she was not able to go to the forest. It was too cold and dark, and the snow was too thick. Also, there were more things at home to which, young as she was, she had to attend.

Recently Lyddy's mother had been ailing. She found it impossible to do all the work of the shack, so that the lighter tasks fell to her daughter's share. There was less to eat than ever now, and the cold grew so terrible that it took all Lyddy's father's time to chop sufficient wood for firing.

Her father had altered, too. Once he had always been so cheery, with ever a hopeful word on his lips; now his face was anxious and worried-looking. At night the child would hear her parents whispering together for long hours, and always it seemed that her mother was trying to encourage her

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

father and to bring back the smiles to his face.

As the weeks went on the cold increased; blizzards raged and tore, sweeping down over the foothills and shrieking round the shack like demons let loose. In the forest the trees shivered and cracked, and the hours of daylight were so short that it seemed to Lyddy that no sooner was she up, than it was dark enough to go to bed again.

With the increasing cold Lyddy's mother grew steadily worse. There came a day when she lay down the burden of her household duties and did not rise from her bed. Then Lyddy's father seemed broken with despair. He seized the weak, white hands that lay outside the coverlet and kissed them passionately.

"What shall I do?" Lyddy heard him mutter. "Oh, my girl, I have brought you out to suffer like this! If only I knew where I could get a doctor! If only I knew!"

That was the burden of his cry, and as Lyddy heard it she thought of the wizard-man. *He* would cure mother, if only she could find him.

On the pretext of getting more firewood from the barn, early the next day she fled out to the forest and took her stand beneath the blazed tree. Her face was pinched and white, but bravely she called, and then—oh, joy!—the wizard-man appeared.

"Why, kid, what are you doing here these days?" he asked, looking down at the shivering child with surprise.

Then she poured out all her troubles, unburdened her sorrow-laden heart, and implored him to save her mother; or, if he was too busy, to work a charm so that a doctor would go to her. He listened and appeared to be thinking deeply. For the first time Lyddy noticed that his face was covered with lines of care and anxiety and his eyes had acquired a quick, watchful look.

Presently he made up his mind and said he would accompany Lyddy to the shack to see her father, and they could then decide what to do. Happily the child led the way to the foothills, and when the house came in sight she ran forward in her excitement.

"Daddy," she cried, "I've brought Mr. Wizard to cure Mummy!"

Her father started up from his seat by the bedside, eagerness as well as mystification written on his face.

"Mr. Wizard?" he began. "Why, what do you mean? *Steve!*"

The name burst from him in a startled cry as the other man stood upon the threshold. The latter's hand flew quickly to his revolver, then dropped, and he eyed Lyddy's father in a grim and fearful way.

"So," he said, very slowly and distinctly, his voice searing through the room like a flame, "I've met you again at last, Jim Temple!" His glance travelled quickly to the woman lying on the bed; his keen eyes rested a moment on her face, and a smile more bitter and grim than ever curled his lips.

"I understand your—wife—is ill?" he went on, and there was no sympathy in his voice, only a certain hard exultation.

"Yes," replied Temple, and his face was very drawn and grey. "I think she's dying. I can do nothing for her—I have nothing. I want a doctor, but God knows where there is one near here!"

"Ay," said the other, "*He* knows—and *I* know!"

"Then—" began Lyddy's father, but the sudden, eager look faded completely from his face before the other's expression, and a look of utter despair succeeded it. "I see," he went on slowly, "you'll not tell me. You'll let her die; that is your revenge, and—I love her!"

He sank into the chair, hiding his face in his hands. The other leant forward across the table which stood between them.

"Yes, you love her; I hope you do, for then you'll feel as I felt when the girl I loved died—when you killed her, killed her body and soul!"

"Steve!" Temple's voice broke. He had a moment's anguished vision of the years before and of the dark-eyed girl he had wooed and stolen from his friend.

The passing of years had rendered his remorse no less bitter, and it swept over him now at the thought of his betrayal. How she had trusted him, giving her heart and her soul into his careless keeping! Then, realising her betrayal too late, she left him. But shame and suffering wrecked her both physically and mentally, so that when she returned to her own people she only wished to die.

He made a gesture as though to beg the other to cease, but the hard, inflexible voice went on.

"I hope you worship your wife who lies dying there, and when you lose her it will only be the punishment you deserve for filching from me the girl *I* worshipped. What did you do to her? Where did you leave her, with her murdered soul and her broken heart? Yet you want *me*—the man you stole from—to fetch a doctor to save your wife! No, I will not save her!"

Temple sprang from his chair, his hands outstretched in desperate entreaty.

"For God's sake, Steve! Every moment you lose may be her death. You cannot delay. You cannot refuse knowing what it means. It will be murder if you do!"

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

"And what do I care for that? 'An eye for an eye'!"

A look of acute anguish crossed Temple's face.

The other man turned towards the door, but Temple sprang forward and seized his arm.

"Listen!" he said, his voice was quiet and steady now. "If you murder my wife you commit a double crime." He opened a workbasket which stood on a shelf near the door and took from it a tiny knitted garment. "Remember, whatever I have done, I have never murdered an unborn child!"

A dark flush crossed the watching man's face, his hands clenched and unclenched nervously, and again that anxious, hunted look crept into his eyes. Lyddy's father re-seated himself by the bed. A little tin clock ticked furiously for several moments, and then the man by the door spoke.

"Have you snowshoes?" he asked; "I haven't mine."

Lyddy's father looked up, incredulous wonder on his face, the dark shadow of despair already lifting. He rose and fetched the snowshoes.

"How long will you take?" he asked as he watched the man put them on.

"If I'm lucky I may do the double journey in eight hours. The settlement's over the foothills, and I cannot do it in less than that. If you've brandy, chafe her hands and feet," he nodded towards the woman on the bed and then was gone.

Four hours later he slackened speed and cautiously approached the outskirts of the settlement. Darkness was now in his favour; he successfully negotiated the lighted windows of the saloons and the sheriff's office, and came at last to the doctor's house, which stood a little apart from the rest of the buildings. Looking through the window he saw the doctor within, reading. He stood a moment fingering his revolver uncertainly. He let it remain in his pocket, however, and then pulled the latch of the door and entered without further ceremony. His entry was a signal for the doctor to snatch up his own weapon and cover his visitor.

"It's all right, Doc, don't mistake yourself for the sheriff!" sneered the latter, and then flung his revolver on the table. "Busy?"

"Not so busy that I cannot earn a thousand dollars by trotting you up the town," replied the doctor, removing the revolver to a safe distance.

"So? Well, don't hurry yet awhile. There's a woman dying a mile or so beyond the hills. Guess you had better see her first."

"Ah, yes, a likely tale!"

The other's face grew stern and hard. "D'you suppose I should run my neck into the noose for the sake of cracking fairy stories?" he queried sharply. "Are you coming, or shall I tell the sheriff there's a fellow in this town who won't doctor the sick when he's asked?"

The doctor eyed him, and apparently finding truth written on every line of the brown, hard face, and realising also that it must be a serious case which would cause a man to put a rope round his own neck, he began preparations for departure, and after making a few inquiries concerning the case he rang the bell.

The man who obeyed his summons stared hard at the snow-covered man who stood in his master's room.

"I want you to stay here for a moment or two, Webb," said the doctor. "I'll put the dogs in the sledge myself."

Webb was an astute man. He took up his master's weapon and held it significantly, while the snow-covered man shrugged his shoulders and laughed. Meanwhile the doctor, before harnessing the dogs, paid a visit to the sheriff, so that later, when he was at the sledge with his visitor before him, two men in a similar conveyance followed at a careful distance.

"You've given us a mighty fine run for those dollars," said the doctor amiably, "and I never thought it would have been my luck to get them."

"Served you quite a favour, eh?" retorted the other. "That being so, mind you do your best for the little woman you're going to see now. She's awfully sick, and there's a kid of hers, who's a kind of friend of mine. Also," he hesitated, "I guess her husband's just crazy about losing her."

"Loves her like that, eh?"

"Like that, yes—and I know what that is!"

The doctor glanced at him sharply. For the first time he seemed to regard him in another light, and to realise just what sacrifice he was making.

"It's a pity," he said in a more friendly voice, "you've made such a mess-up of things. You did kill old One-Time, I suppose?"

"No, I didn't. But that doesn't matter. I was mixed up with it, and they've got it against me, anyhow—so I hadn't a chance. Haven't now, for that matter."

"Well, I don't know—" replied the doctor in a musing tone. He appeared to be thinking deeply, and it would seem that he cherished a sudden dislike for those closely-following men behind, for he began to whip up his team to racing speed so that the distance

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

between the sledges widened perceptibly. Also at this point he began to indulge in some bad driving, and with unexpected flicks of the long whip and other irritating practices he goaded the leader into snarling fury.

The foothills were crossed, and the sledge came in sight of the shack. The team behind were exerting themselves to lessen the distance, when the doctor, laying about with his whip, suddenly leant towards his companion.

"Can you run?" he asked quickly.

"Yes," the answer came short and crisp, while a light gleamed in the man's eyes.

"Then—*run!*"

Down cracked the whip again on the head of the leader, the man inside the sledge jumped out and ran; at the same time the team described a wild circle and crossed the trail of the oncoming sledge. Again the whip descended, and with a yelp of rage the leader flung himself upon the foremost dog of the approaching team. In an instant pandemonium reigned. Traces became entangled with traces, the sledges crashed together, and dogs bit and tore.

From the doorway of the shack whence he had run, the doctor gazed at the confusion with grim amusement, while one of the sheriff's men, less taken by surprise than the other, though unable to disentangle himself from the wreckage, fired shot after shot in the direction of a dark form hurrying away over the hills.

During the uproar the doctor escaped into the shack. The man inside rose quickly to his feet.

"Are you the doctor?" he asked eagerly. "There's such a row outside, I wondered."

"I'm the doctor right enough," replied the other, taking off his gloves. "The noise is a little trouble between the sheriff's men and the fellow who brought me here."

"The sheriff's men?" Temple stared at him with perplexed eyes.

The doctor nodded. Then a thought striking him he glanced at the other sharply.

"Say," he said, "do you happen to know the chap who brought me here?"

Temple hesitated shamefaced for a moment, then said in a low voice: "I knew him once, many years ago. Then I served him a low trick. I'd like, if he's outside, and he'd listen, to say something—to shake hands——"

"Served him a low trick? Umph! I'm sorry for that; he's done something mighty fine—for you. No, stay where you are, he's not outside now. He's gone."

A slow dawning of horror came over Temple's face. He had a sudden creeping suspicion—those sheriff's men outside——

"Who was he?" he asked in an agitated voice. "I knew him by the name of Steven West."

"We," answered the doctor, "knew him as—the Racoon."

Temple's face grew white and humbled as his mind travelled quickly back to the scene in the Rest House. "The Racoon!" he whispered, "and he brought you here knowing . . . I've sent him to his death! Those men outside! They've got him?"

"Not by a long way," replied the doctor with a grin; but on one of the sheriff's men, who at that moment came in for an explanation, he turned such a grim look of disapproval at being disturbed in his professional duties, that the officer quickly retired. "No;" he went on with a chuckle, "they haven't run the Racoon to earth yet, and he'll give 'em a good chase still. I could have done with those dollars though!" he added, as he turned to the sick woman on the bed.

A TUBE TRAGEDY.

She sat in a corner demurely,
  Her eyes were cast down on the floor;
The train quickly dashed through the tunnel
  With rattle and clatter and roar.

He sat in the opposite corner,
  And hoped against hope that she would
Raise her eyes and look on him with favour—
  (He was over six feet when he stood!).

The train hurtled into a station,
  She raised the veiled orbs, gave a hint
Of a smile—but our hero had bolted—
  He *hated* a girl with a squint!

—Mabel Dean.

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

MR. EDITOR —HIS PAGE.

Matters of Great Importance.

"THE ROYAL" ON ACTIVE SERVICE.

THE ROYAL is a much-travelled magazine, and penetrates to the remotest corners of the globe. It has recently cropped up in East Africa, where the dearth of literature may be imagined from the words of a Padre who, in the course of an article in the *Cornhill Magazine*, writes as follows: "The fruits of our deal with the Intelligence Officer (a school copy of Danet's '*Le Petit Chose*,' very much abbreviated, and with maddening connecting passages in German, in return for a very ancient ROYAL MAGAZINE), has been read and re-read."

Doesn't it bring home to you the urgent need for sending your ROYAL to one of our fighting men, or, failing that, passing it over the Post Office counter to be distributed with others where reading matter is most wanted?

HERO AND HUMORIST, TOO!

"The greatest tragedy of the war is that it has taken from us so many of the men that the nation can least afford to spare," says Mr. Sidney Dark in his preface to a collection of sketches—articles is too dull a word!—by Ivan Heald, which have recently been published in book form by this firm, under the title of "Hero and Humorist."

Ivan Heald was certainly one whom the world could ill spare. Whether retailing his adventures in London or his war experiences in Gallipoli and France, his whimsical humour never failed. He squeezed laughter out of everything, and these sketches, written in peace and war, have all the charm and delicious drollery of the man whose bubbling humour not even the desolation of Gallipoli could quench.

The book is published at 3s. 6d., and can be obtained at any bookstall, or post free from The Publisher, 18 Henrietta Street, London, W.C. 2, for 3s. 10d.

GOOD NEWS FOR PRIZE-WINNERS.

In our June number appeared a striking article by Mr. Horatio Bottomley entitled "Would I Like to Live My Life Over Again?" I offered a prize of £5 for the best contribution on this subject sent in by my readers. The entries were all good, but the best of them were so nearly equal in merit that I have decided to divide the prize into five, and a cheque for £1 each has accordingly been sent to the following:

Miss Maisie Gaffikin, King's Castle, Ardglass, Co. Down; "Shirley," 86 Boundary Road, St. John's Wood, N.W.; Mr. S. Hughes, 26 Arundel Street, Walton, Liverpool; Mrs. N. Crotty, Ballyduff, S.O., Co. Waterford; "Senorita," Bradford.

While on the subject of competitions, I feel I should be failing in my duty to you if I did not tell you of the very attractive one which my colleague, the editor of PEARSON'S MAGAZINE, announces in his August number. He is out to encourage the talent of amateur poets, and is offering twenty-three guineas in prizes for the best lyric suitable for a popular song. More than that, he has induced Mr. Herman Darewski, the famous composer, to set the three best lyrics to music and to have them published by the firm which bears his name.

There's a chance for you to acquire fame and fortune! You will find all particulars in the August PEARSON'S.

THE F.A.F.

This year Miss Gladys Cooper, the beautiful actress, is appealing in the ROYAL on behalf of the Fresh Air Fund, which exists for the purpose of sending poor city children into the country. Fifteenpence pays for a day's outing, while fifteen shillings gives a delicate child a whole fortnight's holiday.

If you have not acted good fairy to some little city child, won't you do so now? I acknowledge with sincere thanks from Miss Cooper and myself the following amounts:

Amounts previously acknowledged, £83. 8s. 7d.

Mrs. F. Wise, £3; Mrs. N. H. Hamilton, 15s.; Miss Tuson, £1; F. W. Kirk, 10s.; S. Richmond, 1s. 3d.; Mrs. Dixon, £1 10s.; Mrs. Darling, 7s.; Miss K. Brookes, 15s.; H. Pymer, 5s.; Miss Whitaker, £1 10s.; H. C., 15s.; V. Cotsam, £1; Capt. C. Marchant, £2 2s.; C. Chamberlain, 2s. 6d.; Miss G. Fry, £2; Miss W. Wyatt, 15s.; Mrs. Beetham, 15s.; Mr. and Mrs. F. Lindo, £2 2s.; Miss L. Peters, 15s.; E. Tuck, 3s.; Mrs. M. Causser, 5s.; A. N. White, 10s.; Mrs. E. Heath, 3s.; C. M. Calder, 15s.; A. Griffin, 3s. 7d.; J. and J. G. C., 7s. 3d.; Subaltern, 7s. 3d.; Anon., 2s. 6d.; Mrs. Turner, 1s. 3d.; For three, 3s. 9d.; C. V. Hulbert, £1 10s.; E. H. Knight, £5 5s.; W. Watson, £2; Miss H. Orde, 5s.; A. Griffin, 3s. 7d.; J. Kelly, £1 1s. 3d.; H. Saxby, 5s.; Miss K. Edwards, £1 10s.; A mother, 15s.; M. Carter, 15s.; D. E. O., 5s.; W. L. Opie, £5 5s.; C. Tapply, £3; Sister F. E. Van Wort, 2s. 6d.; Mrs. H. Dobbs, £1; An Australian, 2s. 6d.; Miss Wood Homer, 2s. 6d.; C. V. Bush, 1s. 6d.; Lieut. C. V. Peyton Ward, £1; Mrs. Copper, 5s.; W. P., 5s. 1d.; C. L. C. Allinson, 15s.; Anon., 5s.; Arnside, 15s.; Miss Barfield, 2s. 6d.; M. A. Thormah, 5s.; Mrs. A. Fraser, £1; Miss S. L. Currie, 5s.; Anon., 1s. 3d.; G. T. C., £5; Anon., 5s.; Miss Volkert, 1s. 3d.; G. M. Scott, 5s.; In memory of Cyril, £1; In memory of C. A. G., 15s.; Miss Cruikshank, 10s.; Mrs. Stansfield, £1 10s.; J. A. Parrott, 2s. 6d.; Miss Farquhar, 11s. 6d.; Bristolian, 5s.; D. A., 2s. 9d.; W. A. Backhouse, 6s.; Mrs. Moncreiff, £5; Mrs. M. L. Macgregor, £2; A. Mackay, 2s. 6d.; I. B. Atkinson, 15s.

Grand (Royal Magazine) Total, £153 19s. 10d.

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY